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ABSTRACT

The handbook for persons working with deaf blind children in residential settings includes general suggestions, specific teaching activities, and an introduction to sign language. The book is based on the John Tracy Clinic Correspondence Learning Program for Parents of Preschool Deaf Blind Children. General suggestions are provided for topics such as setting goals and encouraging independence and for dealing with the child's sight, hearing, health, discipline, language, and play. A major portion of the document consists of specific activities and illustrations for teaching the following skills (sample subsections are in parentheses): body movement (walking, body awareness); eating (using utensils, setting the table); dressing (selecting clothes, tying shoes); toilet training (flushing the toilet, washing hands); personal hygiene (brushing teeth, washing hair); and play (playing Simon Says, following an obstacle course). Basic signs are introduced with each activity, and the final section of the document contains illustrations of the manual alphabet and more than 120 signs. (LS)

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Learning Steps

A Handbook for Persons Working with Deaf-Blind Children in Residential Settings

Prepared under the sponsorship of the
Southwestern Region Deaf-Blind Center,
California State Department of Education

and the
Bureau of Education for the Handicapped,
U.S. Office of Education, Department of
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Introduction

This handbook is based on the John Tracy Clinic Correspondence Learning Program for Parents of Preschool Deaf-Blind Children. The project was administered by Dr. Edgar L. Lowell, Director of the John Tracy Clinic, and the following members of his staff: Sandra Meyer, Consultant, Education of Deaf-Blind Children; Virginia B. Thielman, Director of Communications; and Carole Rouin, writer-editor.

The development and publication of this handbook was sponsored by Dr. William A. Blea, Project Director, Southwestern Region Deaf-Blind Center, California State Department of Education; and Robert Dantona, National Coordinator, Centers and Services for Deaf-Blind Children, Bureau of Education for Handicapped, U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

This handbook is organized into three parts: (1) general information about deaf-blind children; (2) specific activities for use in helping the children to learn new skills; and (3) an alphabetical listing of signs.

The first part contains a general discussion of what it means to be a deaf-blind child. It contains a discussion of the special problems inherent in working with deaf-blind children. The effects of those problems on the teacher are also discussed.

In the second part, specific activities are suggested for use in teaching children skills related to body movement, eating, toilet training, dressing, personal hygiene, and use of leisure time.

The development of skills in most children occurs in a generally predictable sequence. That is, most children learn new skills in the same order, but not necessarily at the same ages. The order in which the activities are presented in this handbook is compatible with the general sequence of child development.

The teacher may begin with activities in any general area: body movement, eating, toilet training, and so forth. Start with an area that is particularly interesting, one that is presenting problems, or one that the child needs most.

Basic signs are introduced with each activity. However, if information about more signs is desired, the alphabetical listing of signs in section three should prove to be particularly helpful.

Part I General Information

Teaching and learning are everyday affairs. They go on as part of everyone's daily life. We have all learned how to take care of ourselves. We have learned how to eat, dress, walk, talk, and use a toilet. Our parents taught us, just as we have taught our children. This kind of teaching, and this kind of learning, is a part of everyday life.

Deaf-blind children need to learn to do these things, too. They learn them, as all of us do, through experience. This means their everyday living experiences need to become learning experiences.

You are with these children more than anyone else. You are there when they wake up. You are there when they dress and bathe and eat. You are there when they go to the toilet.

They need to learn skills for these day-to-day routines. These are the times that you can help. With your help, these children can have constant practice in developing new skills. They can have the continuous learning experiences they need.

Making Your Job Easier

You may feel you have too much to do already. Your job is not an easy one. Working with deaf-blind children may be difficult at times. It can be hard physical work. It can be tiring emotionally.

Carrying out the activities in this book will not mean doing more work. It may seem like more work at first because some of the activities are new or different. But later, as the children learn to care for themselves, your work will be easier.

We realize you have many children to care for. But, no matter how large the group, you care for them one at a time. You must pull the shirts over their heads one at a time. You help them go to the toilet one at a time. You help them scoop up food one at a time. You can use these moments with each child to help him learn to care for himself.

Setting Goals for the Child and You

You can set a self-care goal for each child. Then, you can work toward that goal.

Working toward a goal always makes a job more interesting. With a goal, each task begins to have a meaning and a purpose. This, too, is going to make your job more interesting.

Being interested in your work makes it more enjoyable. A job you enjoy always seems easier!

You need other things to enjoy besides your job. You need to be interested in something besides the children you care for. Outside interests and pleasures are important.

Develop yourself. Develop your own interests. Your enthusiasm and energy will probably carry over into your job. You will find you are more enthusiastic and more energetic. You will be happier in the work you do with the children.

You may even want to set goals for yourself. These may be personal, for your own enjoyment or pleasure. Or, they may be professional. You may want to take a course at a nearby community college. Or, you may take part in an in-service education program.

Be realistic in the goals you choose for the children. You may be discouraged if the goals you set are too high. You may be overwhelmed if you try to set too many goals at one time. Be willing to smile - or

even laugh - when everything goes wrong. Nothing is going to work perfectly all of the time. A sense of humor will help you keep going.

Solving Problems

This handbook cannot cover all the problems you may have. We can only offer general suggestions for use in possible problem areas. We can explain why certain things happen and tell you what deaf-blind children are sometimes like.

Activities are offered for use with deaf-blind children. We know that every activity won't be suitable for every child. You must decide which activities the child needs to help him achieve his full potential.

Some of the information included in this handbook you may already know. Other portions of it may be new. This will depend on how long you have been caring for deaf-blind children in a residential setting. It may also depend on the ages of the children you have cared for.

Adapting Activities to the Child

You may find that although the children you care for are teen-agers or even older, their development is uneven. In some ways they may be quite dependent and childlike. Most of our suggested activities will be usable, regardless of the age of the person involved. However, the child's size may be a problem. If the child is too big for you to hold or handle easily in the way the activity suggests, adapt the activity or substitute another one.

Using Sight, Hearing, and Touch

Use the language, both the words and the signs, that go with each skill. Speak, sign and touch each child before every activity. Say the word as you make the sign. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Use correct language - short, but complete sentences like "Time to eat," "Come here," or "Put it on."

You want the child to know what you are talking about. Help him by showing him. Let him see and feel the object immediately. This helps the child connect the sign, sound, and touch with what you are talking about.

Although they are called deaf-blind, many of the children you care for will have some vision and some hearing. Try to help these children use any hearing and sight they may have. They will learn better if they use all of their senses.

When speaking to a deaf-blind child, stand directly in front of him at eye level. Bend your knees to get down to his eye level if you need to.

Stand close enough for him to see you - not more than one or two feet away at most.

Speak clearly and sign when he is looking at you. If he turns his head or is looking at something else,. he will not see what you are signing.

If the child is totally blind, touch him before signing. Let him feel your hand movements. Then take his hand and make the sign. His sense of touch and his memory of his own hand movements will help him learn the signs.

Let him place his hand on your cheek, or have him lean against your chest as you speak. He will be able to feel the vibration of your voice.

The child may not know or understand the sign you use. But, when you sign and help him sign, he knows that something is going to happen. Given time and lots of practice, he will begin to know what is going to happen. The sign, the word, and the touch will begin to have a meaning.

For example, if you say and sign TIME TO EAT, the child may not understand. But, if you repeat the words and the sign before every meal, he will begin to understand what TIME TO EAT means.

Developing a Sense of Security

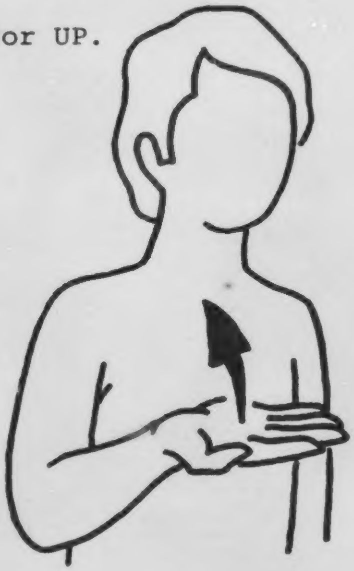
When the child knows and understands what is happening, he begins to develop a sense of confidence and trust. His day will be full of activities that he can understand, activities that he can look forward to, and activities he may remember. Knowing means he can participate because he understands and is no longer afraid.

Learning to Use Signs

If you have never learned to use signs, don't worry. Signs are illustrated and described on almost every activity page. Just look at the picture and hold your hands in the same position. Then, move your hands in the direction the arrow points.

Try making the sign for UP.

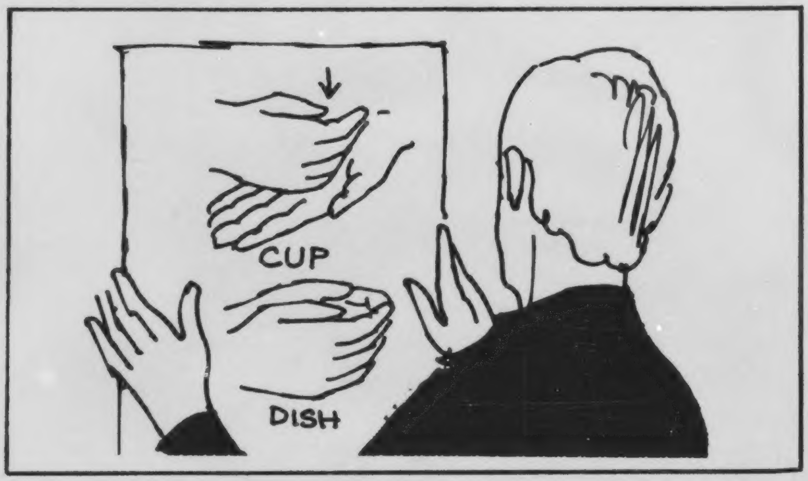
Hold your hand at waist level, palm up as shown in the picture. Then move your hand upwards following the arrow. That is all there is to it.



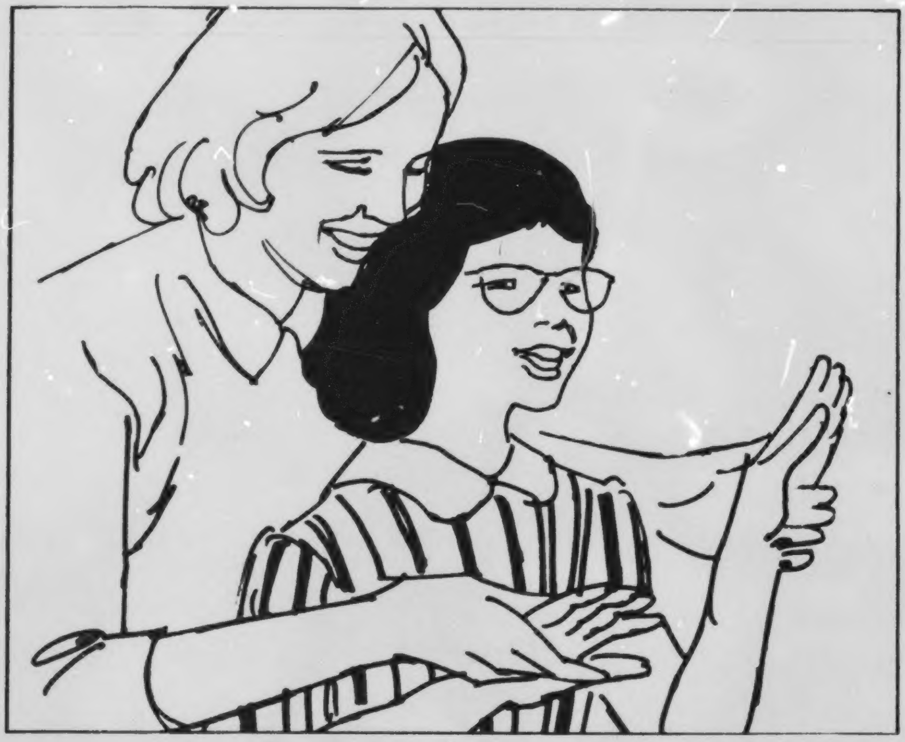
Start with one sign and use it frequently. The more you use a sign, the easier it is to remember.

Use signs with other staff members as well as with the children. Try signing to each other as you talk. It makes learning easier. And it makes learning more fun.

Make posters of signs you use. Put them in the bedroom, the bathroom, the dining room. Use them with every activity that goes on. The poster will be there to remind you and to help you.



Posters will also remind others to use signs with the children. It is important for you and all staff members, and even visitors, to use the same sign for the same activity. If you already know and use a different sign than any we suggest, that is all right. Use the one you know. Just make sure that everyone else uses it, too. Posters will help remind them.



Teaching the Child

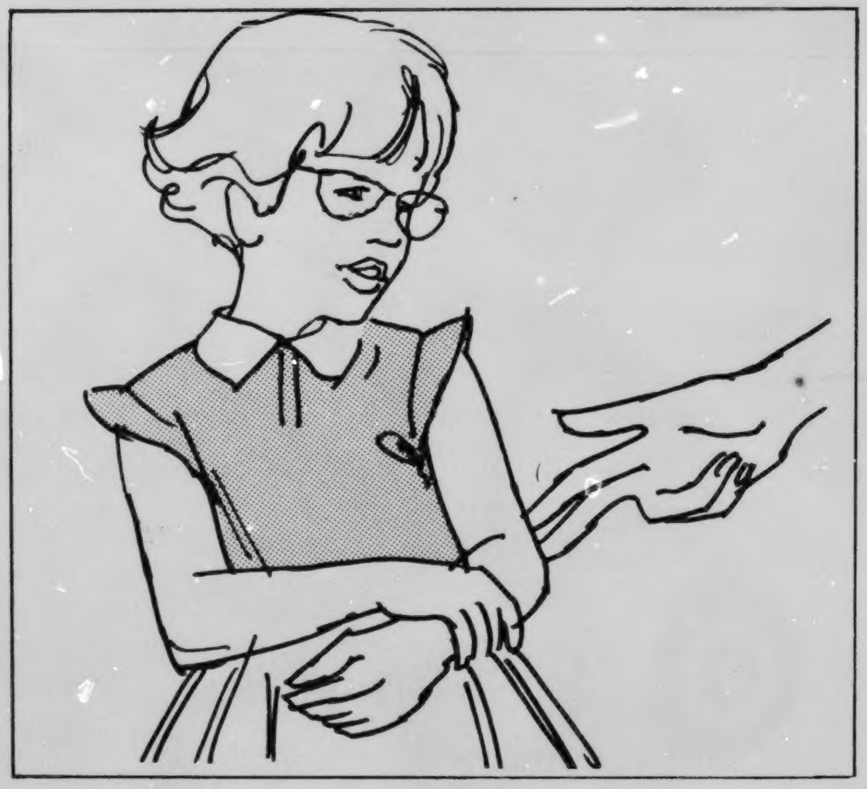
Keep your hands over the child's hands and make all the movements with him. This helps him learn how to move. It also gives him the guidance and support he needs. You may need to stand behind the child to do an activity. Be sure to sign first, facing the child, before you move behind him.

Encouraging Independence

When you feel the child try to do any part of the activity himself, ease your grip. If he stops or hesitates, tighten your grip and help him continue the activity. Guide him until you feel him try again. Continue this cycle until the child can go through the entire activity with your hands only lightly touching his.

When the child is able to do more by himself, you can guide him by holding his arms lightly above the wrist. Again, when you feel the child try to move by himself, let him do so. If he stops or hesitates, continue guiding him until you feel him try again.

As the child becomes more independent, move your hand to his elbow. Tap him gently as a reminder if he hesitates or stops.



This gradual withdrawal of your support will encourage his independence while still offering guidance and help when he needs it.

Don't hurry. Progress may be slow, especially at first. Learning takes time. Remember, each small step in learning is really a giant step for the child.

Don't get discouraged. If you try something once and it doesn't work, keep trying. Once is not enough. You may have to try to carry out an activity five or six times before you get any response. Be patient. These children need your persistence and your care if they are to learn the skills they need.

When you touch a child - to pat him, stroke his hair, or hold him in your arms - you feel closer to him. And he will feel closer to you.

If at first he draws away, be patient. Pat his shoulder or arm each time you are near him. Hold him often. He will learn to accept your touch. He will be more willing to look at you and to listen to you.

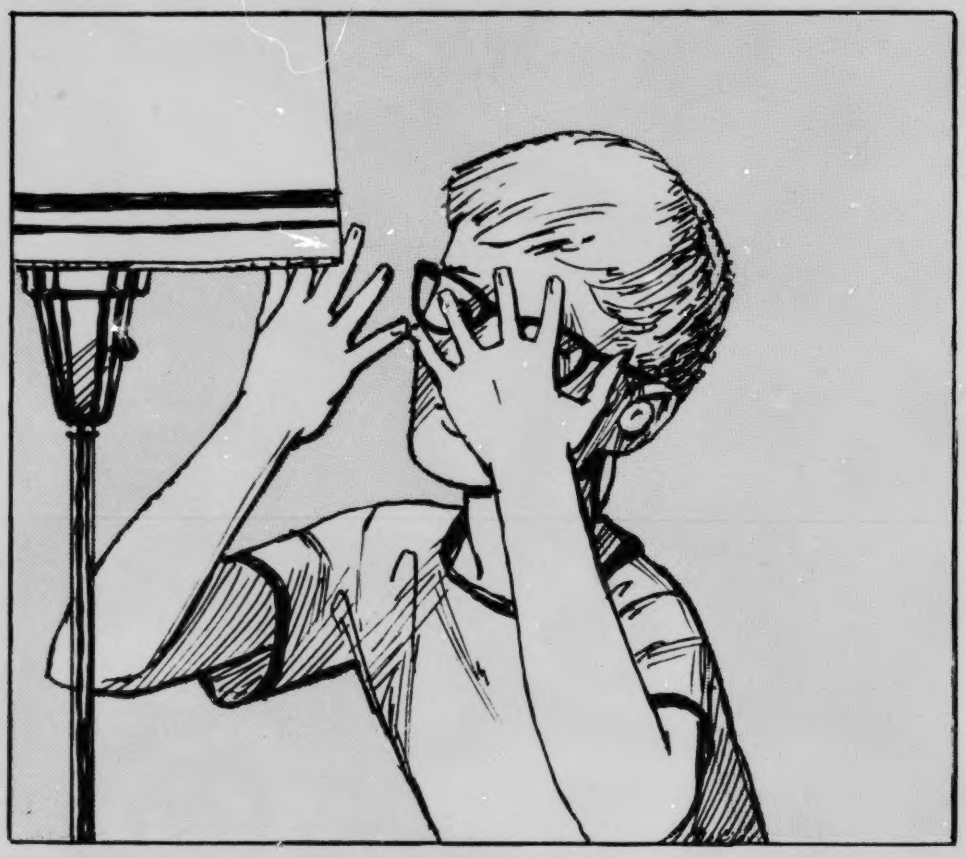
The children who seem hardest to love often need love the most. The ones who resist the most need someone who cares enough to keep on trying.

Modifying Behavior

Most deaf-blind children get little satisfaction from people or things around them. They cannot be entertained by watching or listening to others. Their vision and hearing problems may also limit their physical activity and movement.

As a result, these children may feel restless. They may be bored. They begin to do things we don't like. They may bump their heads. They may bite themselves.

They may stare at lights or poke at their eyes. They may flick their fingers in front of their faces. They may grind their teeth.



Deaf-blind children may do these things to release tension. They may do these things to entertain themselves. They may do them in order to get some sensation, some feeling of being alive. They may do them to get your attention.

If you spank, or scold, or put mittens on him, the deaf-blind child will usually find a new way to stimulate himself. You may stop one problem only to have a new one appear. The child will not stop stimulating himself because you punish him. But there are other things you can do to change his behavior.

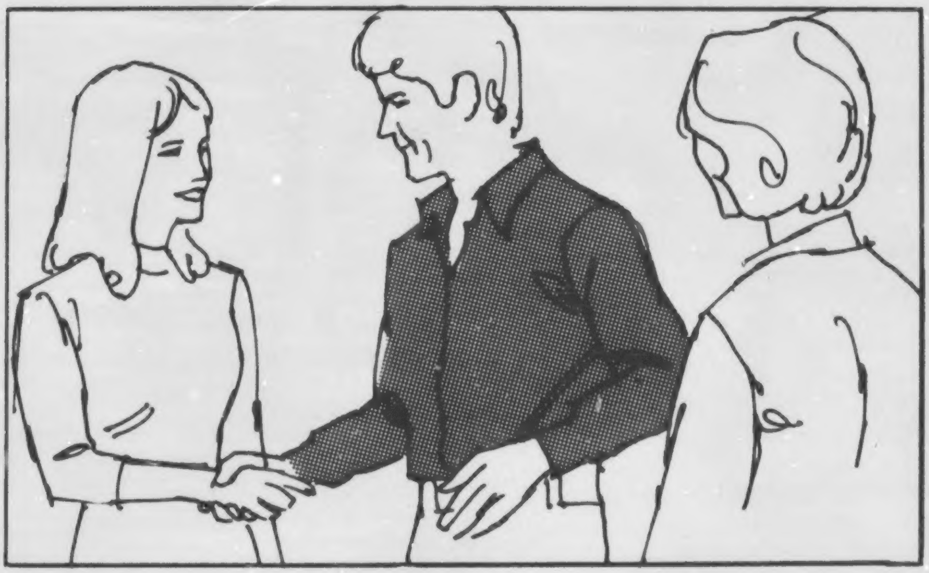
Insist that the child stop this self-stimulating behavior. Say NO and be firm. Let him know that you are not going to let him continue hurting himself.

But, be sure you offer him something else to do immediately - something more acceptable to you. If it is leisure time, encourage him to play. If he should be eating, dressing or working at some task, redirect his hands and attention to the activity he should be doing. Keep him busy as much as possible.

When he does something more acceptable to you, even if it is only that he has stopped the behavior you don't like, praise and reward him. Make acceptable activities fun. A child with some interest outside himself will behave more acceptably.

You can learn new ways to direct the child's interest in the people and things around him. You can replace his unwanted behavior with activities that will satisfy both of you. Reward and praise him immediately for behavior you want continued.

Our behavior as adults can also be changed by praise. When someone tells us we are doing a good job, we feel better. We work harder. We do an even better job.



This is true of all the people you work with. Be lavish with honest praise. Don't limit it to the children you are working with. Spread it around! When you see someone do something special, mention it. When something good happens, tell people about it. It will make them feel good. It will make you feel good. Everyone needs praise.

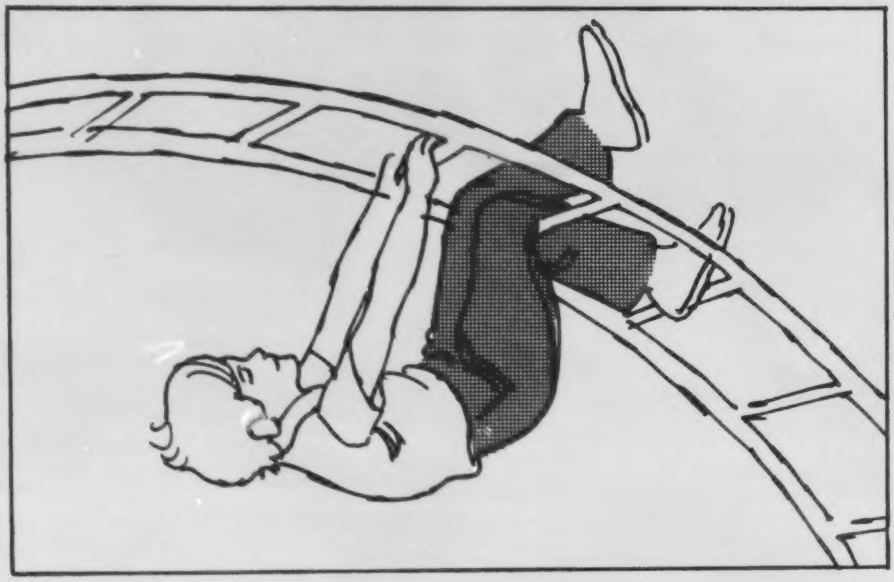
Establishing Realistic Goals

Don't try to do too much at one time. Too many goals and too many activities can make it difficult for both you and the child. He won't be able to choose between them. You may feel frustrated.

Start by choosing one goal, and offering one or two activities that will lead to that goal. Insist little by little that the child take part in the activity with you. After he has practiced the activity with you, he will gain confidence in his ability. He may be willing then to try it on his own.

If the child likes an activity, so will you. You will like the feeling of teaching and of helping him learn. You will like the good feeling between you. It is fun to do things together. But, don't get locked into one activity forever. After the child has learned a skill, he needs to move on to another activity.

Don't drop an activity once it is learned. Practice it in other places. Practice it in other ways. Gradually add a new activity. This will give the child a chance to learn the other skills he needs to know.



Sometimes, a child may outgrow the activity before he has learned the necessary skill. He may grow to be too big or too heavy for you to go on with the same activity. If this happens, adapt or change the activity to fit his needs and yours. All the activities we describe are only suggestions. You will learn more ways to interest and involve each child as you go on working with him.

Letting the Child Grow

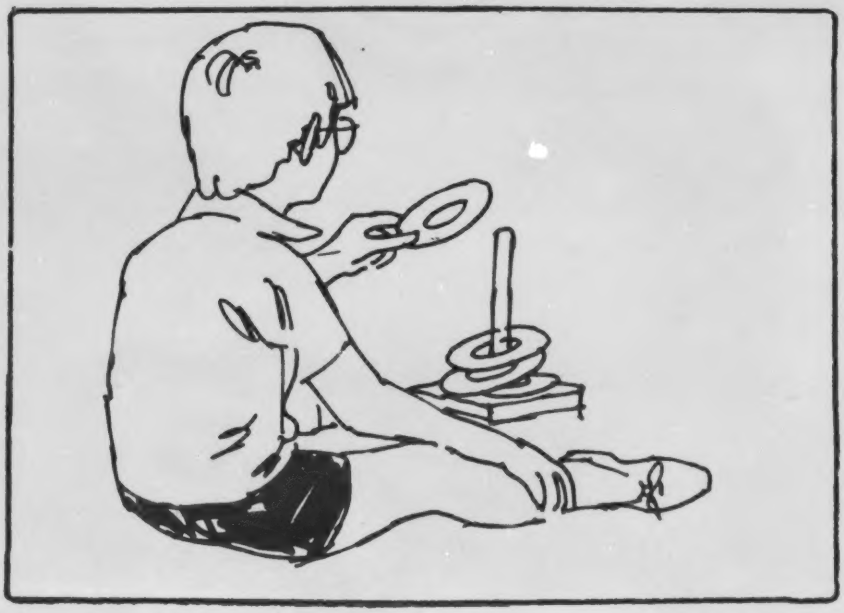
As a child begins to participate, he will also develop his own sense of independence. He will begin to express his likes and dislikes, his feelings and needs. This means he is not always going to want to do things your way. He is not always going to want your help.

Sometimes this rejection hurts. You work with these children for a long time and it is hard to let go. You may want to keep them children. But you must let your feelings grow and develop as the child does.

This doesn't mean the child no longer needs your help. He does. But you want to let the child do things by himself as much as possible. Don't keep trying to do things for him. If he can do it, let him. You don't do him a favor by doing something for him that he can do for himself.

YOU AND THE CHILD'S SIGHT

Even though we call them deaf-blind children, this does not mean there is no sight or no hearing. Many of the children will have at least a little vision. But few will be making use of it. Your job is to help them learn to use the vision that they have.



Some children may have had cataracts removed. They may now have glasses or contact lenses. If the child has contact lenses, make sure he wears them as much as the doctor permits. If he has glasses, try to keep them on the child all day long.

You may be able to keep glasses on the child with an elastic strap like those that athletes wear. If you can't keep them on the child all day, make sure he wears

them part of each day. Start with an hour, and increase the time gradually.

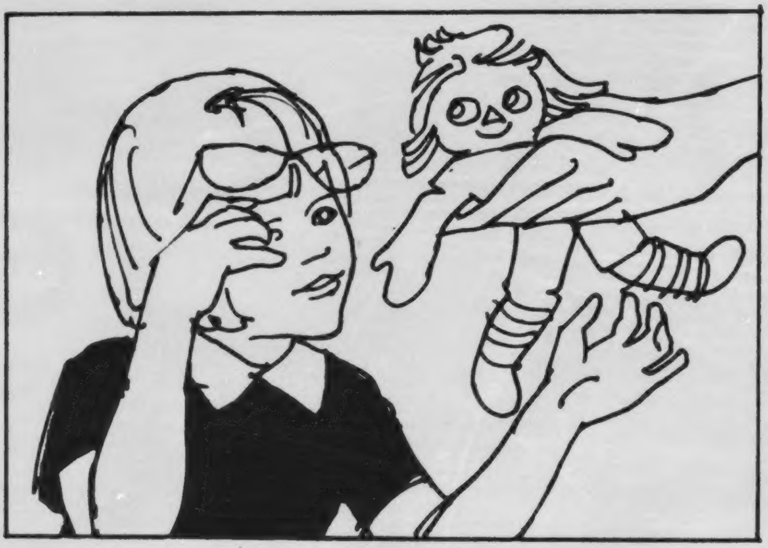
Deaf-blind children need help in using their vision. Wearing glasses or contact lenses may help. Children who have had cataracts removed have lost a strong natural lens. Glasses or contact lenses will help replace this loss.

Discouraging "Blindisms"

Deaf-blind children often have habits we call "blindisms." These habits may be harmful. They limit the use of the child's eyes. Light gazing is one kind of blindism. The children stare fixedly at lights. Try to use shades or screens in front of light bulbs. Use window shades or curtains to soften bright daylight. Seat the children with their backs to the source of any bright light. Move them if the light changes. Children

can't be looking at anything else when they are staring at bright lights.

Other "blindisms" include poking at the eyes or flicking hands in front of the eyes. Pulling the child's hands from his eyes won't do much good. He may still try to poke at his eyes or flick his hands.



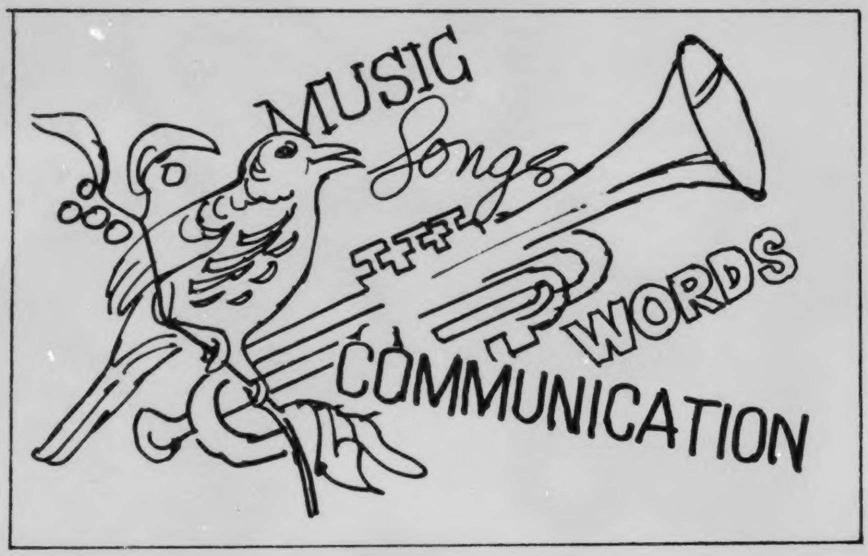
Both habits break up light patterns. They change what the child is seeing. This seems to satisfy or stimulate the child. It also makes it impossible for the child to focus on things. These habits prevent him from using the vision he has.

Limit the time he spends on "blindisms." Keeping the child's hands and attention occupied may help. Try giving him something to hold and to handle. Ideas in our activities will help you get his attention. Getting his visual attention is one of your primary goals in helping him learn useful skills. He can then learn to do other things.

The children you are working with may have physical problems other than sight and hearing. If so, be sure to check with the doctor or therapist before beginning any activity.

YOU AND THE CHILD'S HEARING

Have you ever thought what it would be like if you suddenly lost your hearing?



If you had been born deaf, you would have a much bigger problem. Because you have had a lifetime of listening and talking, you are familiar with the English language. You can carry on a conversation. Even if you stopped hearing, you'd still be able to put words together in your thoughts.

Even though deafness cannot be cured, it can be helped. A child can often use a hearing aid. The aid will make sounds louder so the child has a better chance to be aware of them.

Using a Hearing Aid

If a hearing aid has been recommended, see that:

1. It is kept in working order.
2. The child wears it as much as possible unless he has an infected or injured ear.
3. It is kept in a safe place when he is not wearing it.

If the child does not want to wear his hearing aid, check his ear. If there is any discharge or redness, let the doctor know immediately.

If there is no problem, insist the child wear his hearing aid for a short time. Gradually have him wear it for longer periods of time.

Putting the earmold into the child's ear is not painful. A drop of mineral oil on the mold will make it easier.

Earmolds should fit tightly. If the earmold is loose, have it checked. The child may outgrow his earmolds as often as every six months.

Teaching Deaf Children to Talk

Children born deaf have never heard a conversation. They don't know how to talk. Words have no meaning. But they can learn.

If a child has good vision, he can learn to lipread. He can understand by watching the speaker's lips. And he can learn to use words. It isn't easy, but it can be done.

Teaching Deaf-Blind Children to Communicate

It is hard for a deaf-blind child to see your lips move. So, it is hard for him to use words. Communicating is difficult for deaf-blind children. But some of the children you care for can learn to communicate. It will take practice. Because communication is so important, we stress it in every activity. Always speak to the child and call him by name. Tell him what you are going to do before each activity. Use words. Use signs. Help him use them, too.

Using All of the Senses

The most important senses we have are hearing and vision. But touch, taste and smell are also useful in learning. Movement is another way that deaf-blind children learn. All these ways will help make up for the lack of sight and sound. Try to reach the child not only through his eyes and ears, but in every possible way.

YOU AND THE CHILD'S HEALTH

Some deaf-blind children are pretty sturdy. But, by and large, the average deaf-blind child isn't strong and healthy. Whatever caused the eye and ear problem may affect the child in other ways.

Deaf-blind children tend to be smaller and weaker than other children. They show little interest in food. Teeth may be poor. Muscles are often undeveloped. Hair and skin may seem dry and lifeless. They may have more colds than the average child.

There may be other, more serious problems such as heart or brain damage.

What to Do?

What do you do if one of the children in your care is like this? Alone you can do little. But, as part of a team, you can do much.

Working with Doctors

Each child needs a thorough physical examination. Your job is to make sure the doctors' recommendations are carried out.

You can see that any eye or ear infection gets prompt attention. If the child wears glasses or hearing aids, make sure they fit properly and are checked regularly.

Working with Therapists

It is important that the child gets physical and occupational therapy. Each child needs individual attention. Carry out the therapists' recommendations. Ask them for help when you are having problems.

Working with the Nutritionist

A balanced diet is important. Check with the nutritionist, dietician, or cook to see what foods you can offer the child. He needs foods he likes and foods that will help him learn eating skills. He needs foods to chew and foods of different textures and tastes. A wide variety of foods will give him a balanced diet.

Working with the Child

Take the child to the toilet at regular intervals. See that he has normal bowel movements. Be sure that he is kept clean and dry. Change his clothes if food gets on them.

Brushing teeth, washing hands before eating and washing them again after toileting - these are everyday health-care habits. At first, you will have to take responsibility for these things. But, over a long period of time, the child will learn to do many of these things for himself. Good personal health care will be a part of his daily routine.

A regular routine at mealtime and bedtime, cleanliness, and a balanced diet will make a difference in the child's general health. With medical and daily living care, deaf-blind children have a chance to grow and develop in better health. This may not be a perfect state of health, but it is the best possible for each child.

YOU AND DISCIPLINE

Most grown-ups think children need discipline. They do! But discipline does not mean punishment.

Discipline means setting limits on children's behavior. It means helping them learn what they can do and where they can do it.

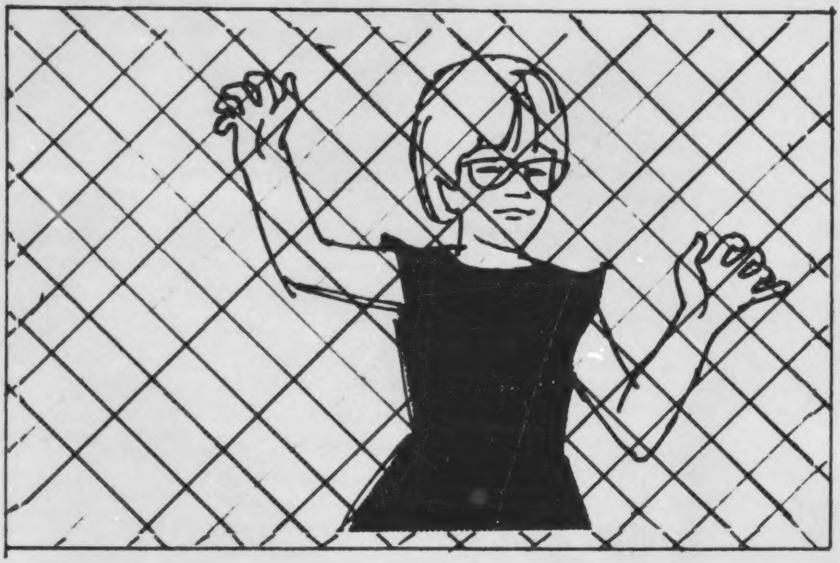
Deaf-blind children in a residential setting have many limits already set for them. These limits are set by their daily routine, by the buildings and grounds where they live, and by your expectations.

At first, discipline must come from you. You make sure that he follows his daily routine. With your help, the child can learn that he eats three meals a day at the same times every day. He learns that nighttime is the time to sleep. He learns that daytime is the time to be awake. These limits automatically provide some discipline.

When his daily life has a routine pattern and the things that he does are repeated regularly, the child begins to develop a sense of time. He may never learn to tell time, but he will know when it is time to eat, to sleep, to play.

The layout of the buildings and grounds also provides limits. Each activity has a place of its own. The place to eat is different from the place to sleep. The child must learn to go to one area for a drink of water and another to go to the bathroom.

He must learn where he can go and when he can go there. He must also learn that there are places he cannot go. Gates, doors and restricted areas provide another kind of discipline.



Setting Limits

Use words, signs and touch to let the child know what he can and cannot do. Help him participate in many activities.

Repeat these activities over and over again. Repetition helps him learn. He will learn what to do. He will also learn what he is not to do. Use words, signs and touch to show him what you expect.

Deaf-blind children learn to do what you expect. Most of these children can learn to wear clothing and shoes, to help when dressing and undressing, and to signal when they need to use the toilet. They may also learn to use signs for food, for sleep, and for other needs.

How much most children learn depends on how much you expect them to learn. If you don't think they can

learn to do these things, you will be right. But if you think they can, you will also be right. The difference between what they can do and will do is up to you. Your expectations, your help, and your demands will help them learn. As each child learns, your limits become his limits.

Saying No

Discipline isn't going to be easy. You may have to say and sign NO. But think before you say NO or STOP or DON'T. See if there are other choices. Say NO only when you have to.

Once you say NO, stick to it. Be consistent. Say NO and mean it. Don't change your mind.

7

Coping with Your Own Frustration

Many times you will feel frustrated, angry, or tense. When this happens, take a moment to relax. Take a break. Stretch. Wiggle your toes. When you come back, try giving the child a smile, a pat, or an affectionate hug.

Relaxing will help you take a fresh look at the child. Surprisingly enough, he may relax, too. Tensions may disappear. Then you will both feel better.

Children often "get to us." We react by getting angry, by scolding, by punishing. It happens time and time again and we wonder why these children don't learn. They just keep making us angry.

Unfortunately, sometimes children will act up just to get our attention. Angry attention, nice attention, any attention will do. They just want attention.

If you find this happening to you, try ignoring their bad behavior. Children are very likely to continue any kind of behavior we pay attention to. This is as true of deaf-blind children as it is of other children. Try to ignore bad behavior. Praise and reward good behavior.

Praise them, pat them, hug them. Reward them with something special. Show your approval often.

YOU AND THE CHILD'S LANGUAGE

All through these Learning Steps we will stress how important it is for you to use words, signs and touch with every activity.

As with all children, communication will be one-way at first. Think how many times any baby hears "Mama" before he knows who "Mama" is. It is still longer before he can say "Mama."

Children hear a word thousands of times before they know what it means. They must hear it many more times before they can use it.

A deaf-blind child will need to see, hear and feel a word even more often. For him to use it will take longer still.

Building Language

Begin with real objects, real-life situations and familiar actions. Don't try to teach the child about things that are far away, that happened yesterday, or will happen tomorrow. Start with what is at hand. Start with things that are there for him to see, hear, feel, handle, or do.

The child must experience the words and signs in direct association with what they represent. Only then will he understand them. This must be done many, many times. Daily activities offer the best place to start. Use words and signs to tell him when it is time to eat, to go to the bathroom, to sit down, to come, to wait. These activities will form the basis of communication for you both.

Recognizing a sign or word is the first step. The child may not be able to use the sign or word, but he will show he understands. He will respond to what you say and sign.

After he has begun to understand you, he is going to want something badly enough to ask for it. A drink? A cookie? To be held? To go to the toilet? He may suddenly use his voice or body to tell you what he wants. This is the beginning of real communication.

When the child tries to use a word or sign, listen and watch carefully. His first try at communicating may be as simple as a tug, pat or push. This is his way of

telling you something. It is important for you to try to understand.

If you understand, let the child know. Give him what he wants. This will encourage him to keep trying to communicate.

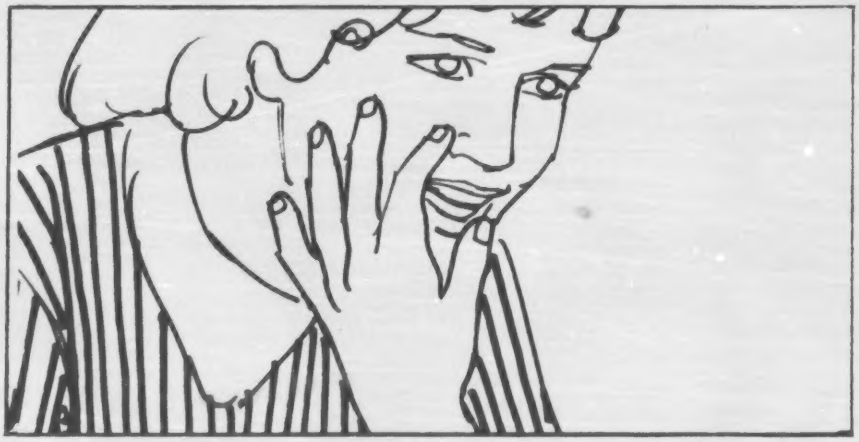
Keep using signs and words. Expect the child to respond. If he uses any sounds or movements to communicate, make him use them. If he doesn't, remind him to try. Wait for him to ask. Always respond when he does. Praise him. Reward him. Try to give him what he wants.

When you do this, you give the child a reason to keep trying.

Using Touch

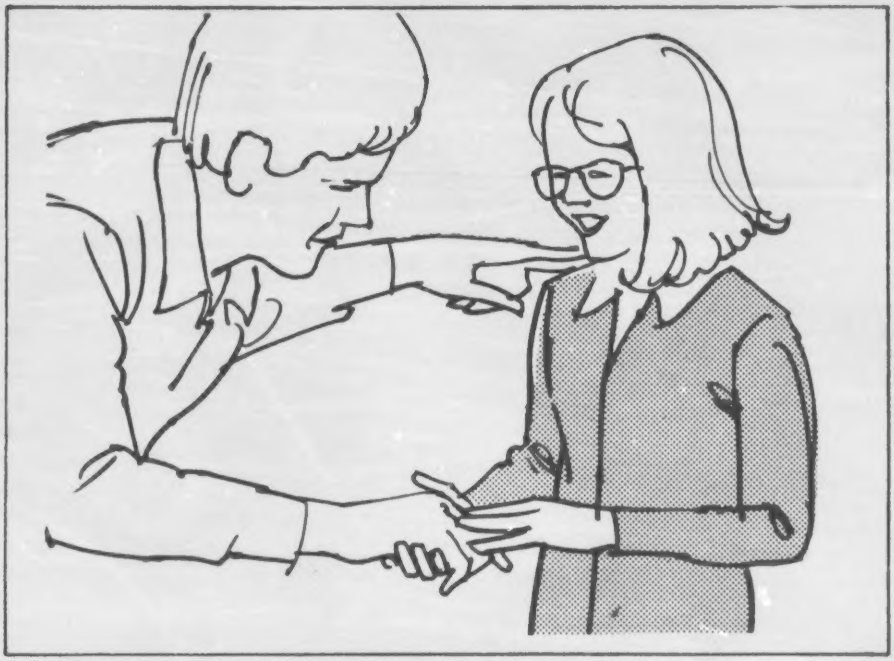
Touch can be used to help the child understand what you say. Touch may also help him speak by giving him extra clues to what you are saying. Touching may be the most important sense for children with no vision or hearing.

To use touch, place the child's hand on your cheek. His little finger should be along your jawline. His index finger touches your nose. His thumb rests lightly on your lower lip. This permits him to feel the vibration of your voice and the movement of your lips. He will also be able to feel the movement of your jaws and muscles. This closeness will help the child to pay attention. He will be close to you.



Helping the Child Know You

Children need to know who you are. Before you start an activity, touch the children. Each staff member may have his own way of touching. One person may identify himself by tapping the children on the shoulder; another may stroke their hair. Always using one of these ways to approach the children will help them know who you are.



Children need to know who they are. They need to learn their names. Always call each child by his name before starting any activity. Use his name sign as you say his name. Touch him. Then help the child make the sign and touch himself.

The first letter of anyone's name is his name and sign unless the name begins with "T." "T" is the sign for TOILET and this might confuse the child. If someone's name begins with "T," use two letters instead of one. For example, if your name is Tony, you may sign "T-Y." All the letters are listed in the manual alphabet on page 260.

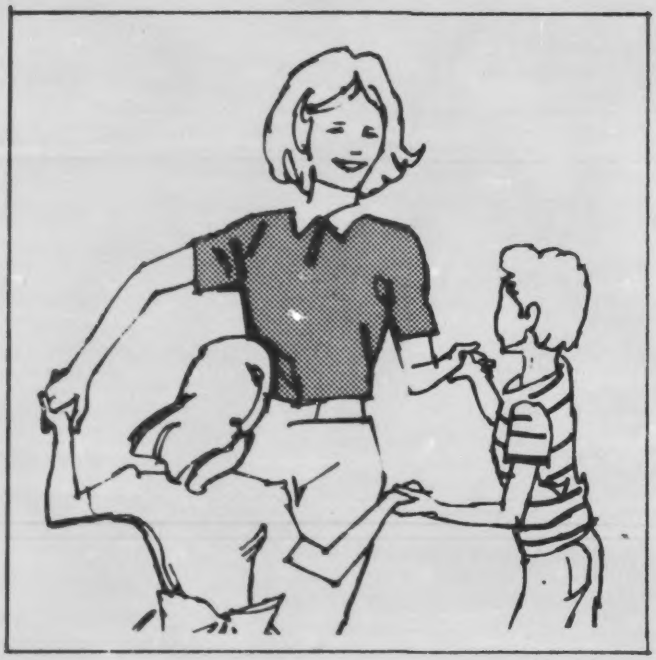
You can help children know who you are by using your name sign. Use your name sign as you say your name. Take the child's hand and help him touch you. Then help him make the sign and touch you again.

YOU AND THE CHILD'S PLAY

Play is a child's work. It is his way of learning. Children learn to use their bodies and minds through play. Every time a child plays, he learns something. Through play, a deaf-blind child learns many skills. He learns how to move his body and use his hands. He learns how to get along with other children and adults. He learns new ways of doing many things. Some of the things he learns may help him in everyday skills like dressing and eating. Whenever a child plays, he is learning.

A deaf-blind child must be taught to play. You will need to help him. He will learn by doing.

Before he learns to play with people, he needs to learn to play with things. You can encourage him to touch, handle, shake and explore toys available to him. Anything can be a toy. But it is very important that



the child have something to play with. It is important that he have something to do.

Begin with things you can do with the child. Help him roll a ball. Help him push or pull a small wheeled toy. Help him roll around on a mat.

Learning to Play with Others

At first, the child may only play with you, or with the toys you give him. As time goes on, encourage him to play near other children. Have two children play side by side or facing each other. Don't expect them to play together. They may not even pay any attention to each other. But they will be aware of each other. This is the first step in learning to get along with others.

It may be a long time before a deaf-blind child will be willing to play with another child. Don't rush it. Someday he may touch the other child, or just look. He may notice the sounds or signs the other child makes. He may make some of his own.

Encourage this first small contact. Immediately praise both children and reward them.

Gradually, you can include the child in a small group. At first, limit the group to one other child. When this can be done easily, introduce a third child. Keep the group small unless all the children are familiar with the activity.

There are many kinds of toys and play equipment. You can't use them all. Use only the toys and equipment that best suit your group of children. Try to have a variety of textures, sizes and types.

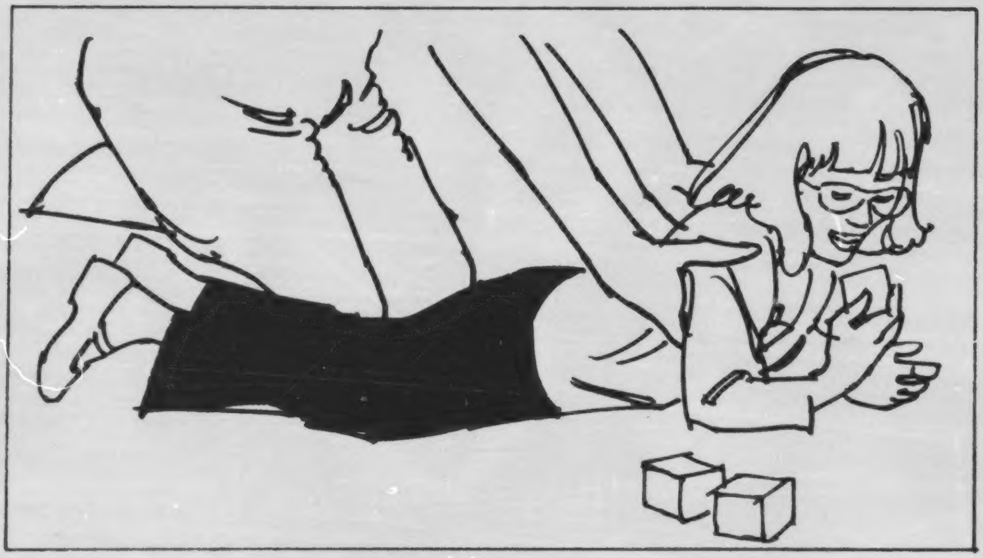
Don't overlook what is already on hand. Ordinary things like unbreakable plastic dishes, pans or containers, hats, shawls, boxes, mattresses and pads can be used for many activities.

There are balls, swings, slides and toys especially made for indoor use. These are safe, feather-light, and unbreakable. They are also cheap and easily available. Make sure the children you care for have something to play with.

Part II Learning Steps

INTRODUCTION TO BODY MOVEMENT

You can help the child develop his body by learning to move. Everyday activities offer many opportunities. Without your help, the child may stay in one place or one position. If the child cannot walk or move on his own, take time during the day to turn him from back to stomach. Prop him with pillows in a sitting position. Lay him on the floor for awhile.



Children need to use and move their bodies in many ways. Changing the child's position will develop his balance and strengthen his muscles. Each body position provides a different experience and will build his confidence. As he becomes more confident, he may be more willing to move on his own.

Speaking and signing will help the child learn to move. At first he may not understand what you want. If you always speak and sign before you move him, gradually he may learn what will happen.

Be close enough to the child for him to see you well. If he has no vision, touch him before speaking or signing so he is aware of you. Let him feel your hands as you make the sign. Then, repeat the word as you help him make the sign.

Start with just one word at a time. When the child understands, he will respond. He will try to do what you want. Then, you can begin to use phrases. For example, say and sign WALK before trying to teach the child to understand, "Go for a walk."

Moving on to New Activities

If a child likes an activity, so will you. You will both want to do it again and again. But, the child must learn other things. You must be willing to go on to new things and new activities even when the child is not. It may be easier to introduce a new activity gradually. Do an old favorite, and then try something new. Or, reward the child for trying something new by doing an old favorite with him.

As you watch and work with the child, you will discover more ways for him to exercise. You will develop ideas of your own to help him. You can adapt our suggestions to fit your needs and those of the child you are working with.

Sometimes a child may be too frightened to try a new activity or to move in a new way. Don't let him refuse. Encourage him, reassure him. Be enthusiastic and persistent. But insist that he try.

Giving the child the time and the chance to move by himself helps his muscles and body. It also makes him feel good about himself.

Do things with the child, but not for him. The more he can do by himself, the more you should let him do by himself.

Physical development and learning take time. Sometimes progress may seem slow. Each child is different and progresses at his own rate.

Some children have other handicaps that make learning more difficult. Not all activities will be good for all children. If in doubt, always check with the child's doctor or therapist. They, too, are part of the team.

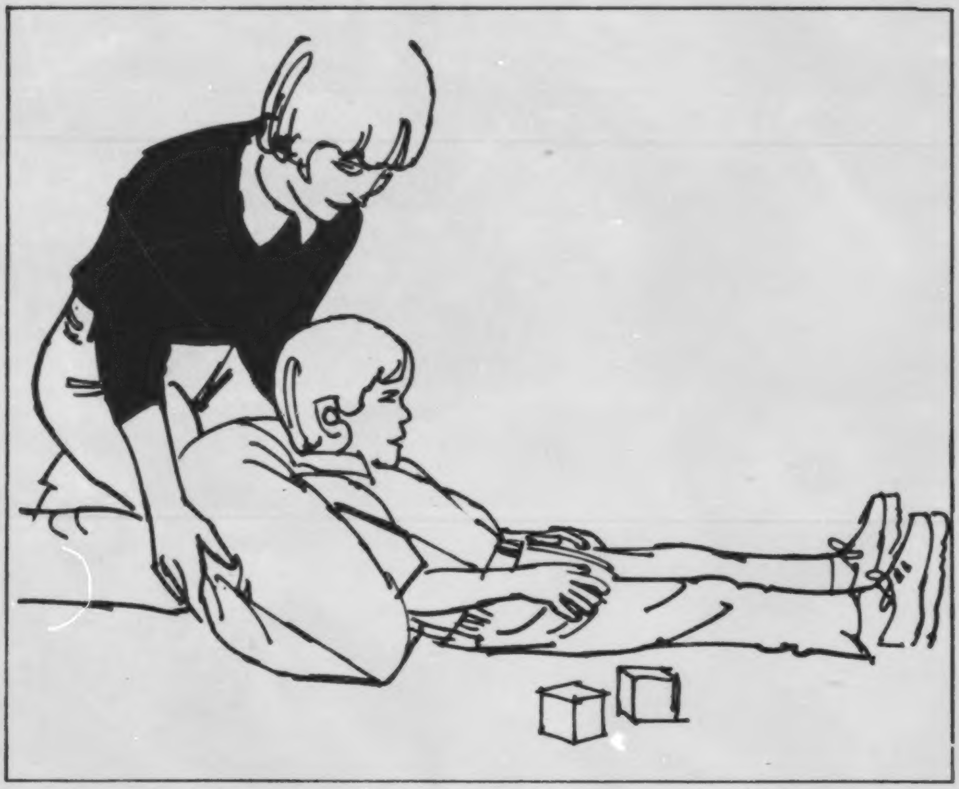
Some information you may know; some may be new. Certain steps may be too hard for some children, but others will be able to learn all these things.

Time is needed to learn anything. Don't give up on your children. Don't think or say, "They'll never do these things." With your help, they may.

Changing the Child's Position

If the child has some vision or light perception, he often will turn towards light. To prevent this, change his position often. It is important for him to learn to turn his body in all directions.

It is important that the child spend some of the day on his back and some on his stomach. Different muscles will be developed in different positions.

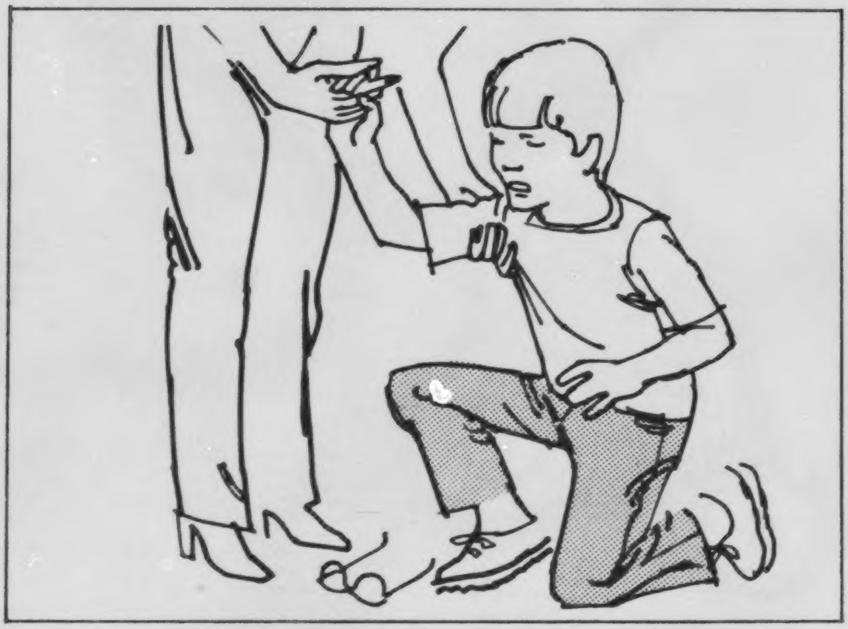


If the child is just learning to sit, prop him up frequently. Let him sit for short periods of time at first. Gradually he will be able to sit for longer periods of time. But don't just leave him somewhere to sit. Move him from place to place. Offer some activity, some stimulation. Do not have him in one position all the time.

Talk to the child as you sit or work close to him. Smile and touch him. Show the child a toy. Hand it to him. Talk to him about it. Give him a reason to reach out, to listen, to look, and to touch.

Beginning to Walk

When the child first begins to walk, he may not be steady on his feet. Sometimes he may fall. Gently help him get up and try again. If you carry him after he falls, he may not try again.



Tile, carpet, cement, gravel, all feel different under foot. Walking on different textures takes practice. Help him get used to the new surface. Then, let him move on his own.

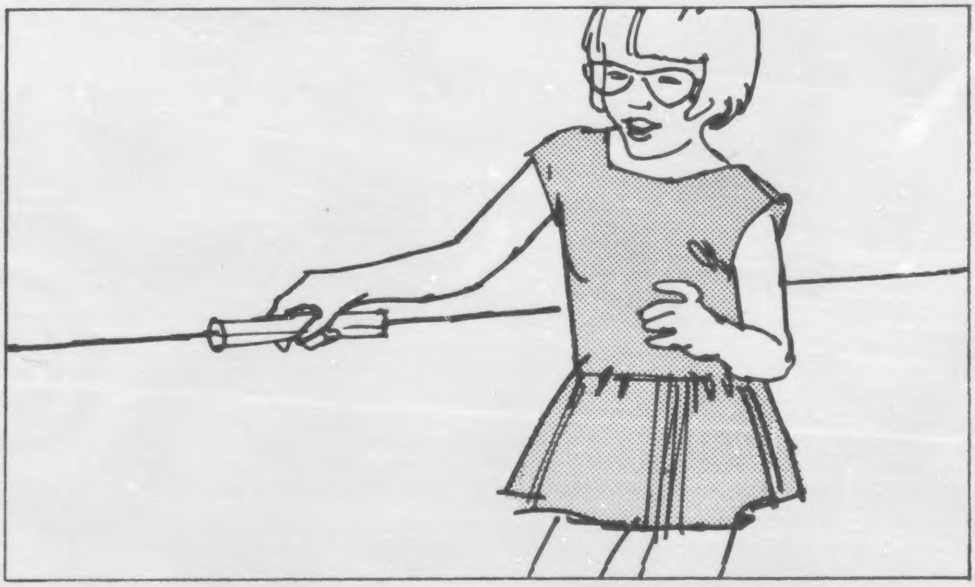
Keep the floor area clear. The child will soon learn to avoid large objects like chairs, but small toys on the floor are dangerous.

The child may feel safer and more secure if he can push a chair or a doll carriage when he walks. Let him do this at first. But, as he walks better, let him move without this help. He will acquire a better sense of balance. He will feel more sure of himself.

Children with poor vision may have problems understanding what they see. This may make them afraid to walk. Looking down on a floor of light and dark squares can be frightening and confusing. The dark areas may look like holes in the floor. He may be afraid to step from light to dark areas, such as on a tile floor.

If the child is afraid to walk in a particular area, help him feel the surface. You may have to get down and show him that the surface is flat. Then help him walk across that area.

Some people have found guide ropes helpful in teaching children to move from place to place. The child may not like touching the rope because of the texture. Put a plastic roller or cardboard tube around the rope. The child can hold the tube instead of the rope. These tubes will slide along as the child moves and keep the rope from touching the skin.



Other people have found the buddy system helpful. A partially sighted child can help another child move from place to place by holding his hand. This helps to make friends.

Importance of Moving

The child needs to develop an idea of his own body compared to the things and people around him. He must understand how big, how far, how fast, where and when. Moving around will help him learn these things.

The more the child learns about his body and himself, the more he will move around. The more he moves around, the more he will learn about himself and his body. The child who is able to move on his own will be able to do more for himself.

Your feelings will be reflected by the child. If you think he can't, he won't. If you think he can, he will be willing to try.

You can help him learn many things in many places. You can help him exercise his body and learn new skills. You can help him learn to use these skills in his everyday life. You can help him during daily activities, indoors or out. Mealtime, bedtime, getting dressed, going to the bathroom and playtime all offer everyday opportunities to develop motor skills.

Praise the child for what he does. Even when he does not succeed, praise him for trying. Trying comes first. The child will not learn if he is not willing to try. Encourage him to keep trying. Praise him when he does.

Encouraging Independence

Your goal is to make every child as independent in movement as possible. For some, this may be crawling. For others, it may mean going from place to place in a wheelchair. Many children will learn to walk. Moving on their own will allow them to attend programs in the facility and the community.

Helping each child be as independent as he can is the most important thing you can do. You should not do anything for him that he can do for himself. As the child learns new skills, expect him to use them. Don't run to his side every time he demands attention. Let him come to you for help.

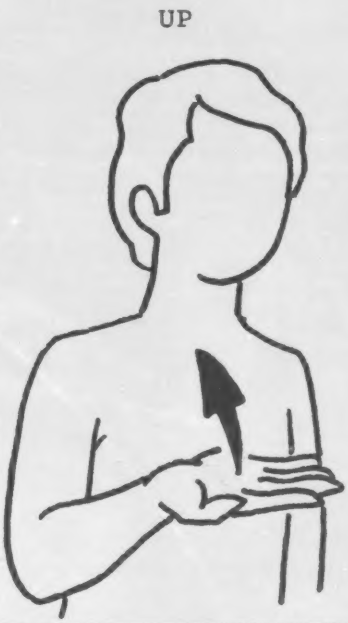
It may be easier to carry the child rather than watch him crawl. Even if it takes extra minutes and patience, allow the child to try to get places himself. Whether he crawls, walks, or runs, let him move independently.

Making the Child Aware of Himself and His Body

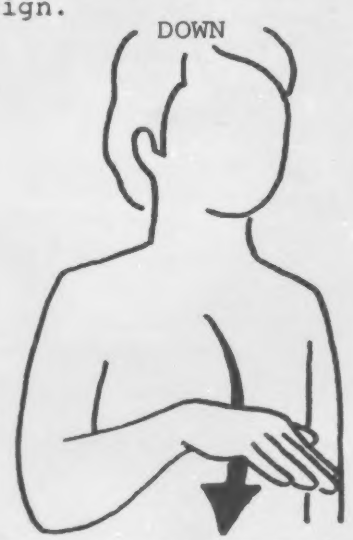
1. Help the child slide his hands from the top of his head down as far as he can reach. Call him by name each time you help him move his hands.

Take his hand and help him touch different parts of his body. Name each part as he touches it.

Say and sign UP. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.



3. Say and sign DOWN. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.



4. With the child on his back, lift his legs up and down. Remember to say and sign UP and DOWN. Do this exercise to music. Make it lively.

Now take his hands in yours. Raise them over his head and then lower them to his lap. Say UP and DOWN as you help him move.

Making the Child Aware of Himself and His Body (cont.)

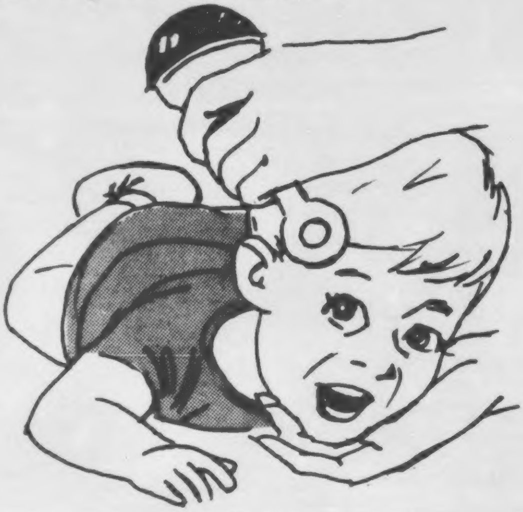
5. Color-, braille-, or texture-code the child's personal things: cup, dish, toothbrush, comb, bib, coat hook. Tell him these are his things. Use his name.

6. Tuck a wad of paper or a feather in his shirt, pants or sock. Tickle him. Make it fun.

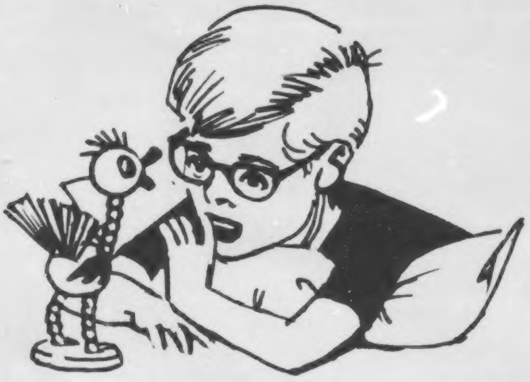
7. Make a game of putting a hat on each other. Take the child's hands and help him put the hat on his head. Then take his hands and help him put the hat on your head. Praise the child when he tries. Tell him he is a good boy. Pat him. Hug him. Hold him close.

Teaching the Child to Lift His Head and Chest

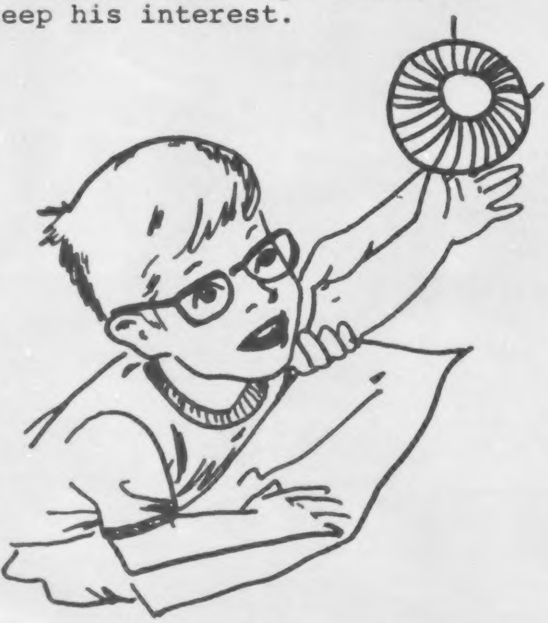
1. Put the child on his stomach. Show him a bright and noisy toy. Touch the child with the toy. Place your hand under his chin. Move the toy slowly upwards. Help him lift his head to follow the toy or the sound.



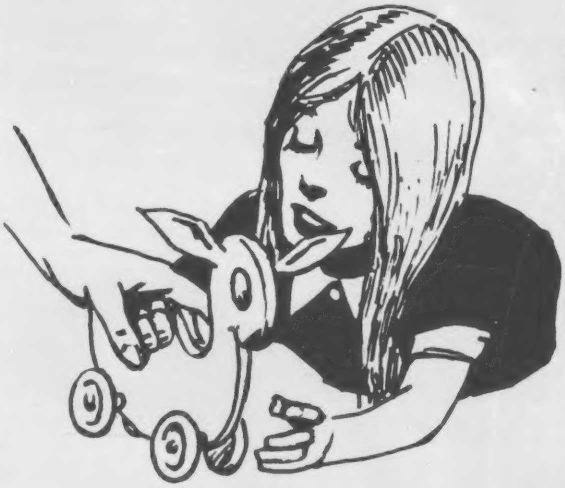
2. Lay the child on his stomach. Prop his chin on a low wedge. Place his arms in front for extra support. Place toys nearby to keep his interest.



3. Lay the child on his stomach, and prop his chest up on a pillow. Let his arms hang over in front of him. Place toys nearby to keep his interest.



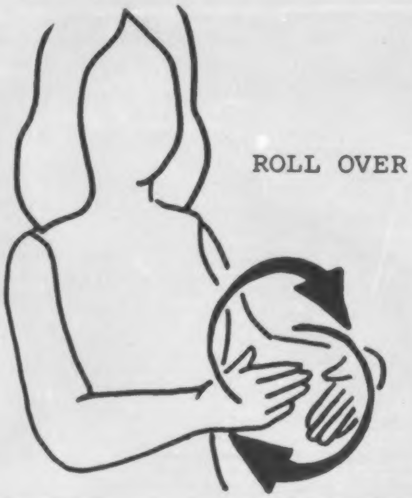
4. Put the child on her stomach. Touch her arm with a bright and noisy toy. Hold the toy in front of her, slightly higher than her head. Help her stretch toward it, leaning on her elbow.



Teaching the Child to Roll Over

1. From time to time during the day, change the child's position. Turn him from front to back. Help him roll over so he can look at things in a new way.

2. Say and sign ROLL OVER. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.



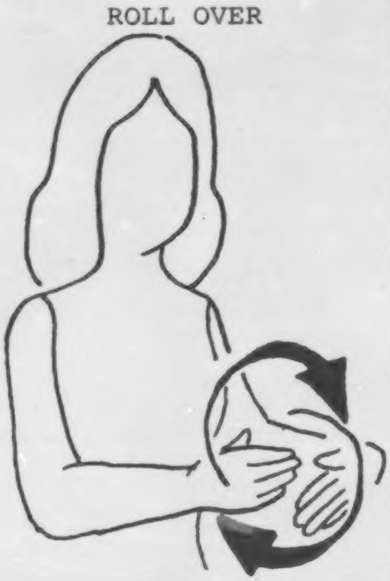
3. Place the child on his stomach and help him roll over. When he tries to roll over by himself, show your approval. Pat him, hug him, praise him. Your approval is his reward.

Now say and sign ROLL OVER and help him roll back again.

4. Place the child on his stomach. Help him stretch his arms out in front of him. Then cross his legs, and gently roll the child over.

Teaching the Child to Roll from Back to Front

1. Say and sign ROLL OVER. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.



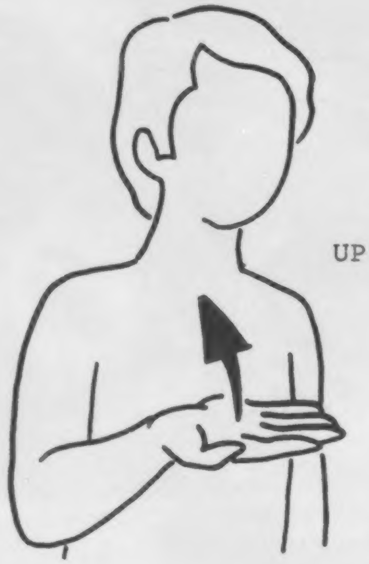
2. Place the child on a blanket. Pull the blanket up gently so the child rolls over slightly. Make a game of it.

3. While the child is lying on his back, place a pillow under him so he is almost on his side. Touch him with a bright and noisy toy. Hold the toy slightly out of reach. Help him roll over as he reaches for it.

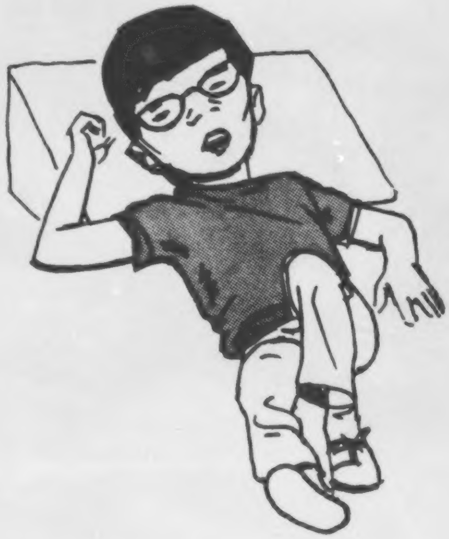
4. Put the child on the floor two or three times a day and play with him. Sit so he can see your face. Help him roll over. Praise him if he rolls over by himself.

Helping to Strengthen the Child's Muscles

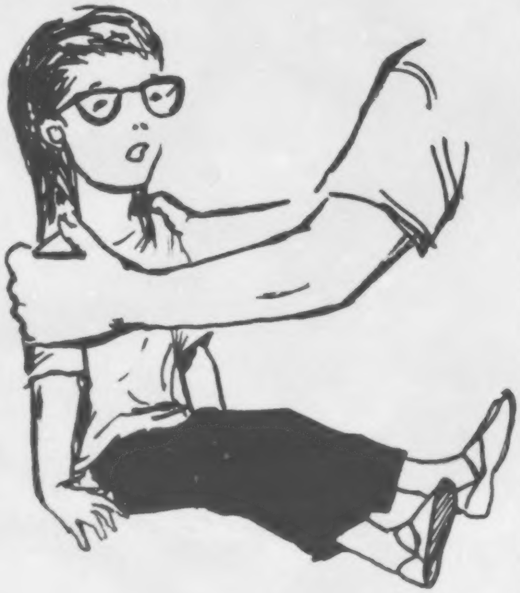
1. Say and sign UP. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.



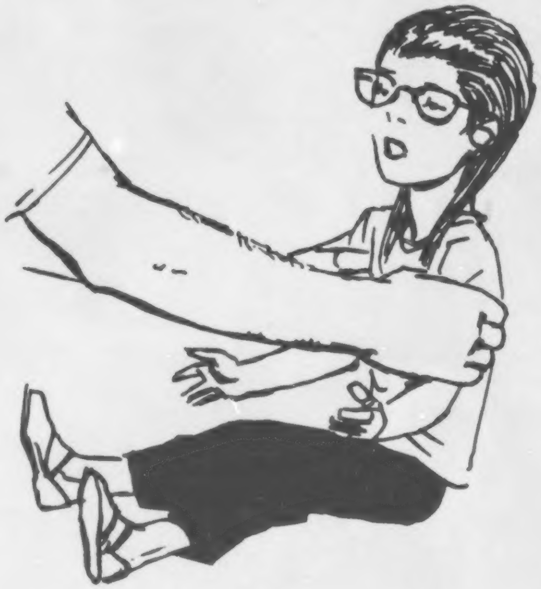
2. If the child's head falls back when you pull him up, prop his head on a low wedge for short periods of time.



3. When the child is lying on her back, support her at the shoulders as you help her sit up.



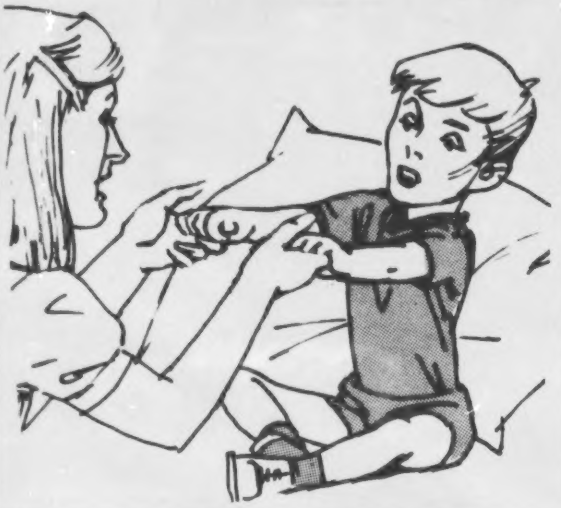
4. As the child gains more head and neck control, hold her arms above the elbows as you help her sit up.



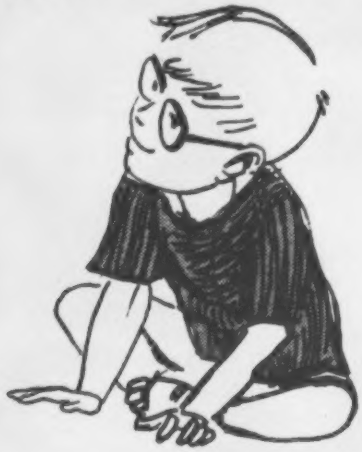
Helping the Child Learn to Sit Up

1. Prop the child up with pillows. Sit him up to feed him. Sit him up to dress him. Keep these "sits" short at first - less than ten minutes. Gradually, as the child's back grows stronger, increase them to half an hour.

2. Let the child hold onto your fingers or hands and pull himself to a sitting position.



3. Say and sign SIT. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Prop him up, using his own hands and arms for support.



4. Prop the child with pillows. Say "Clap" and clap your hands. Then help her clap her hands. Repeat this until she can clap without your help.

5. Take the child outdoors. Prop him up on the ground. Sit with him. Help him feel leaves, dirt, rocks, the ground. Help him reach for an object.

Helping the Child Learn to Sit Up (cont.)

6. Prop the child in a chair. Sit down, facing him at his eye level. Sit close to him with a toy in your hand. Name the toy. Let him touch it. Move the toy an inch or two away. Encourage him to reach for it. If he doesn't, help him. Take his hand and place it on the toy.

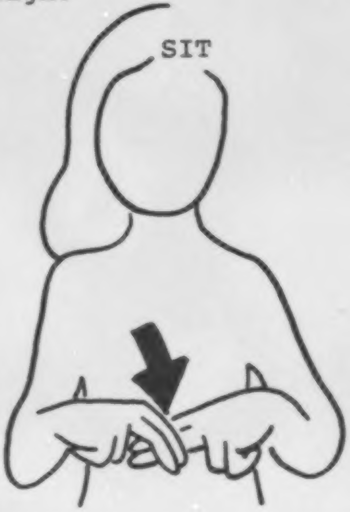
7. Sit with the child in front of a mirror. Say and sign UP and put your hand up. Repeat the word as you help him put his hand up. Then say and sign DOWN. Put your hand down. Repeat the word DOWN before putting his hand down. Do this until he can lift and lower his hand without your help.

8. When the child has gained some head and neck control, sit on the floor facing each other. Sit with your legs out straight. Reach out and hold his hands. Rock back and forth holding hands. As you move, sing or say:

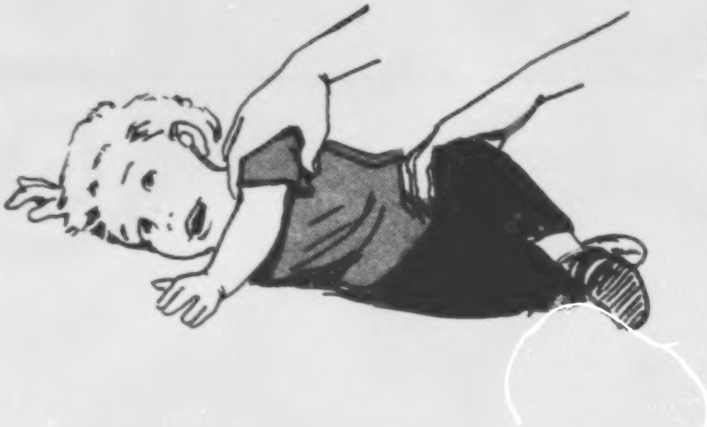
Row, row, row your boat,
Gently down the stream.
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily,
Life is but a dream.

Learning to Sit Up

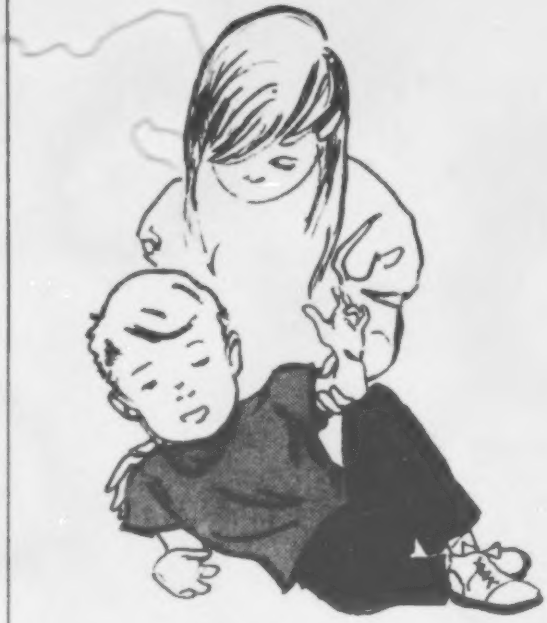
1. Say and sign SIT. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.



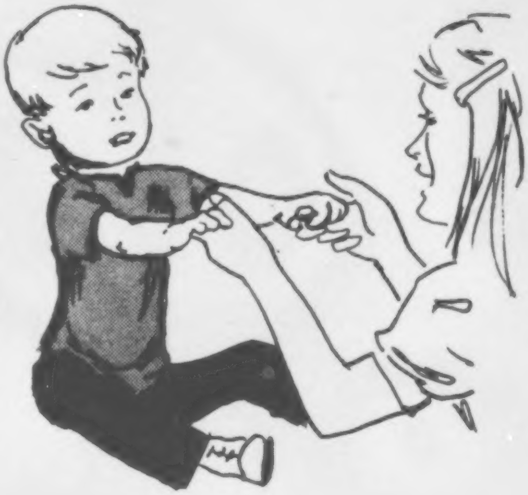
2. Help the child roll over onto his side.



3. Grasp the child's upper arm. Help him raise up on one elbow.

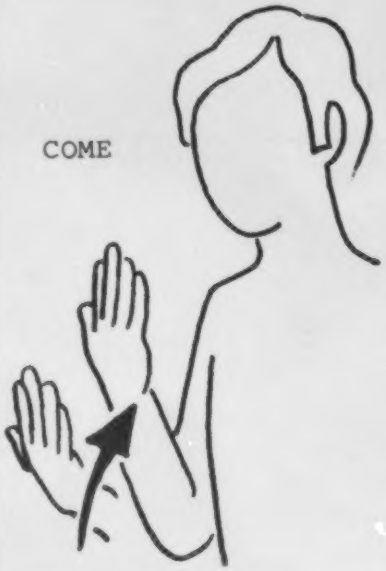


4. Pull the child up so that his legs are out in front of him as he sits up.



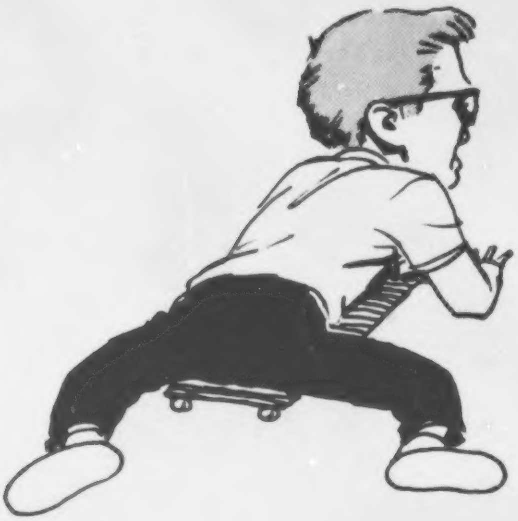
Teaching the Child to Crawl

1. Say and sign COME. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

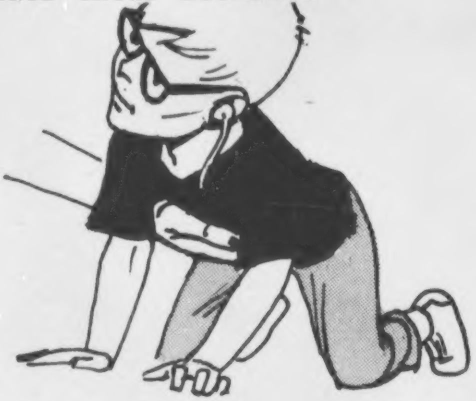


2. Put the child on his stomach. Touch him with a toy to get his attention. Show it to him. Let him touch it. Then place the toy a few inches beyond his reach. Say and sign COME. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Help him crawl by moving his legs for him.

3. Place the child on a crawling board. Praise him when he moves. Make it fun.

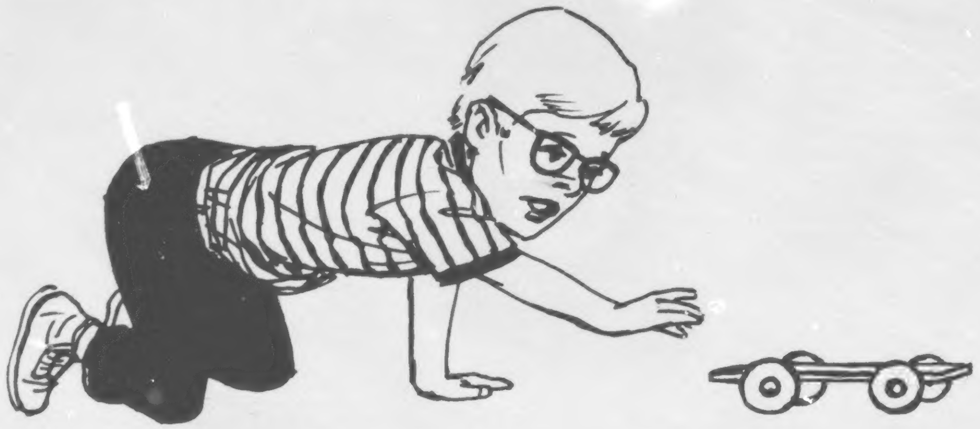


4. If the child drags his stomach as he crawls, help him get up on his hands and knees. Put your hand under his stomach and lift his back up until he is on his knees. With large children, try lifting them with a sheet or towel wrapped under their stomach.



Teaching the Child to Crawl (cont.)

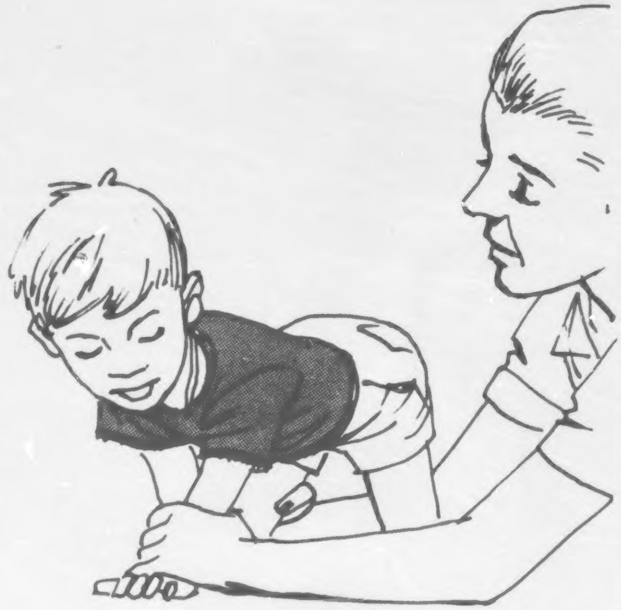
5. Place the child on his hands and knees. Show him a push toy. Help him push it back and forth. Then push the toy beyond his reach. Coax him to crawl forward to get it. Praise him if he tries.



Push the toy farther away as his ability to move increases.

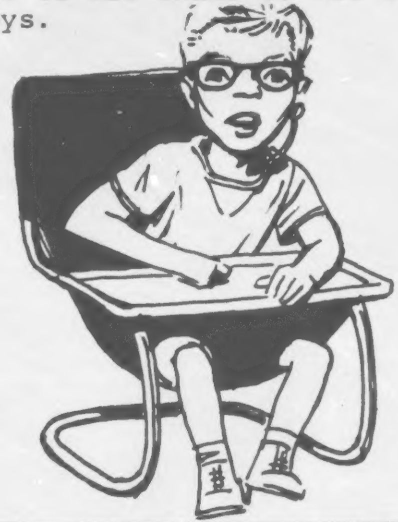
6. When you want the child to come to you, call his name. If he doesn't look at you, try stamping your foot or clapping your hands. When he does look at you, say and sign COME. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Don't always go to him. Teach the child to come to you.

7. When the child is up on his knees, help him move his arms and legs together. Left-right, left-right, left-right.

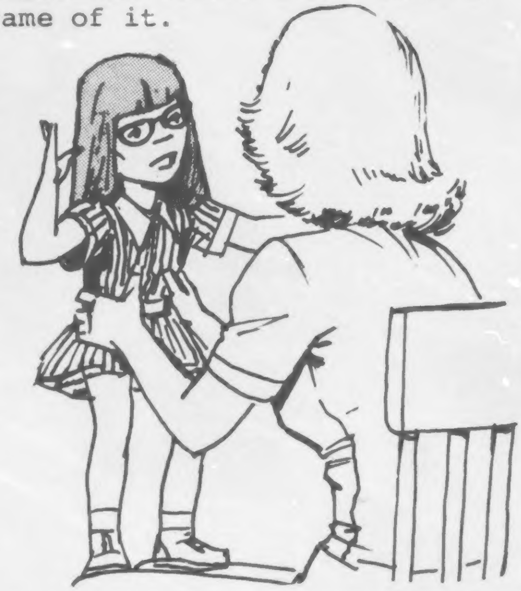


Helping the Child Learn to Stand

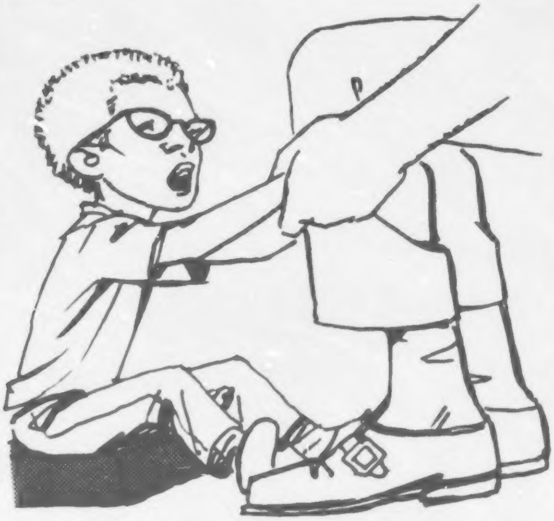
1. Let the child sit in a jumper chair for a short period of time. This allows his feet to touch the ground. His legs will grow stronger as he pushes against the floor. Let him play as he sits. Tie toys to his chair or use suction toys.



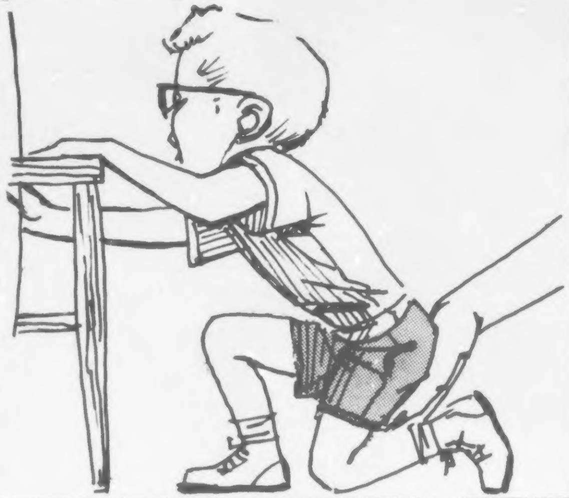
2. If the child is not too big, sit in a chair and let her stand on your knees. Hold her at the waist and bounce her. Make a game of it.



3. While the child is sitting, take his hands and pull him to a standing position. Help him bend his knees and brace his toes with your feet. Say and sign UP, then pull. Say DOWN as you lower him.



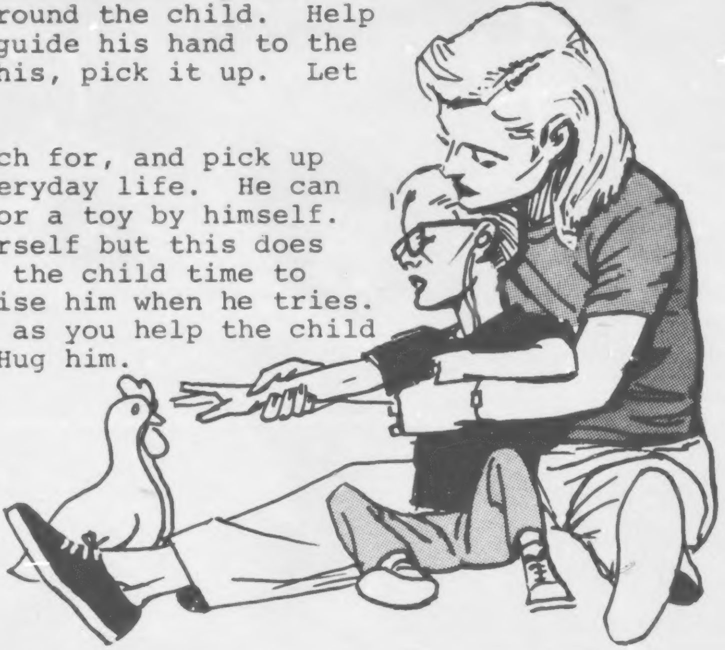
4. Help the child get into a standing position by himself. Place him on his knees. Let him hold onto a bench or the side of the bed. Lift one leg and place his foot flat on the floor. Now place your hand on his rump and gently push him up.



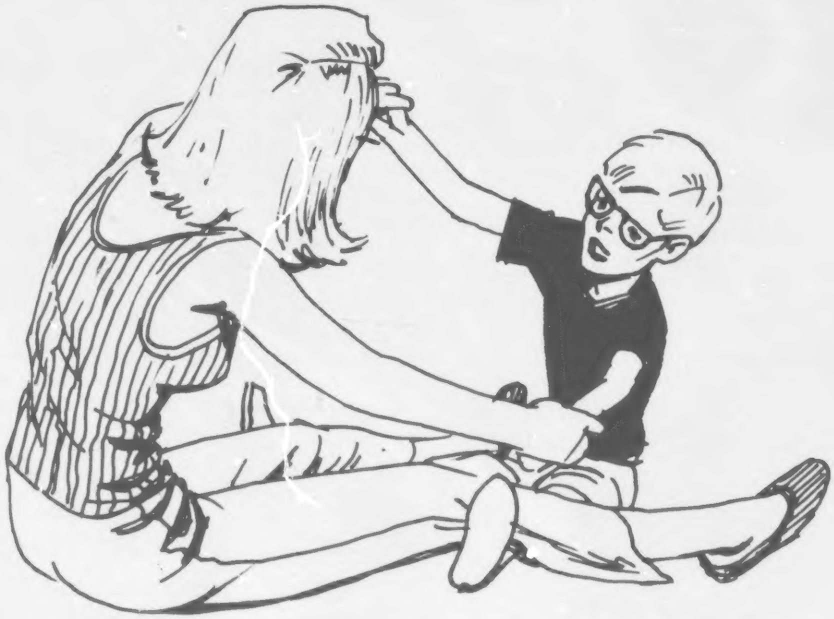
Teaching the Child to Turn His Body

1. When the child is seated, show him a toy. Let him touch it. Name it. Put the toy beside him. Sit with your arms around the child. Help him turn at the waist and guide his hand to the toy. With your hand over his, pick it up. Let him play with it.

Help the child notice, reach for, and pick up things that are part of everyday life. He can pick up his shoe, a towel or a toy by himself. It is quicker to do it yourself but this does not help him learn. Allow the child time to do things by himself. Praise him when he tries. Say GOOD. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Pat him. Hug him.



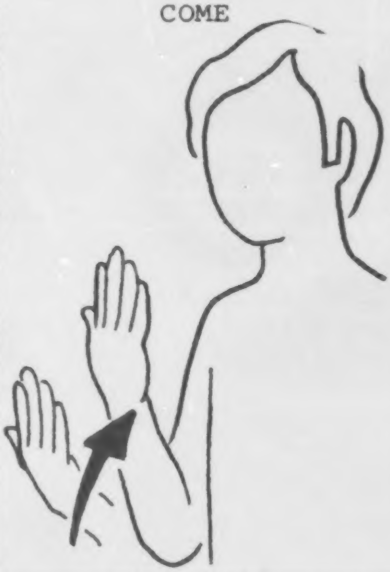
2. Sit down, facing the child. Take his hands and swing from side to side. Make a game of it. Make it fun.



Helping the Child Crawl Longer Distances

1. Say and sign COME. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

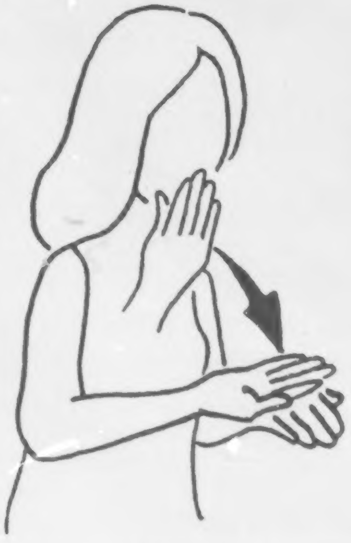
COME



2. Sit a foot or two from the child. Show him a bright scarf or toy. Wave it to get his attention. Say and sign COME. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. If he doesn't move toward you, reach over and tug at his shirt. Or, have someone else head him in your direction.

3. Say and sign GOOD. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

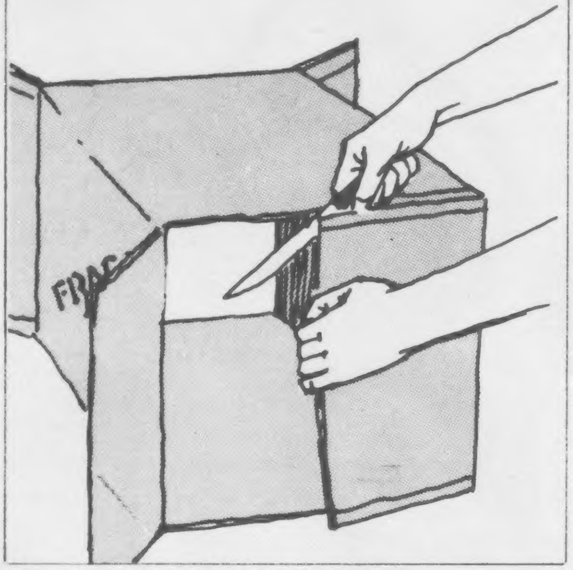
GOOD



4. Get on the floor with the child. Show him a toy. Place it a few feet away. Say and sign COME. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Start him crawling toward the toy. Spend a few minutes playing with him when he reaches the toy. Say and sign GOOD. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Your attention is his reward.

Helping the Child Crawl Longer Distances (cont.)

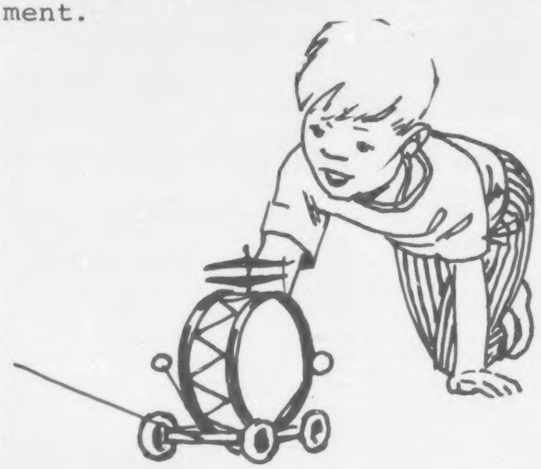
5. Tunnels are fun to use and easy to make. Just remove the ends from a cardboard box or drum.



6. Crawl through the tunnel with the child at first. Move him under your body. Then help him into the box and coax him to crawl to the opposite end. Place a lighted flashlight or noisy toy at the other end to attract him. Call to him. Encourage him to move along. Praise him when he does. Say and sign GOOD. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Pat him. Hug him. Make it fun.

7. Sit or stand a few feet from the child. Ring a bell to get his attention. Say and sign COME. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. When he reaches the bell, help him ring it.

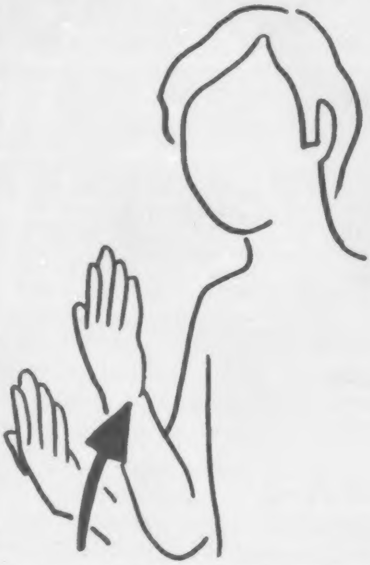
8. Tie a toy on a string. Show the toy to the child. Name it. Put the toy on the floor and pull it a little out of his reach. Keep it moving. Let the child reach the toy before he gets tired or discouraged. Use lots of praise and encouragement.



Helping the Child Learn to Walk

1. Say and sign COME. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

COME



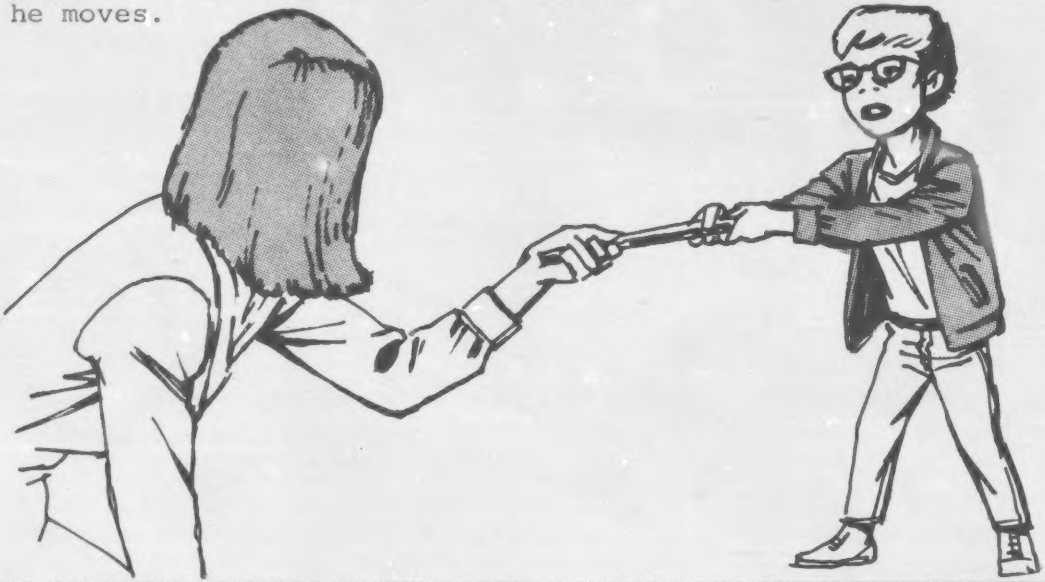
2. Stand the child next to a chair or bed. Show him a bright or noisy toy. Let him touch it. Then put the toy about six inches away from him. Help the child move sideways toward the toy. Take hold of his feet and slide them one at a time in the direction of the toy. Slide the child's hands along in the same direction as he moves.

3. Stand behind the child and hold him under his arms. Place his feet on yours. Begin to walk, step-by-step. This will help the child get the feel of walking.

4. Hold the child's hands while he is standing up. Encourage him to take a few steps. Praise him if he tries. Say and sign GOOD. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

Helping the Child Learn to Walk (cont.)

5. Get a short stick. Have the child hold one end. You hold the other. Pull gently so he will take a few steps. Praise him when he moves.



6. Let the child walk, holding on to a stroller or doll carriage. Or, let him push a chair around.

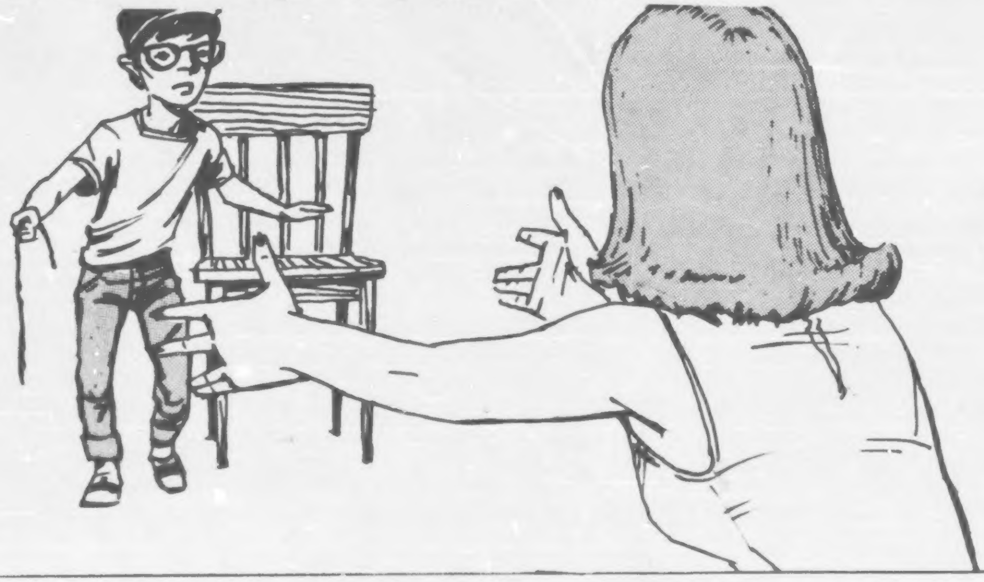
7. Have the child hold one end of a short rope. You hold the other end. Say and sign COME. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Let the rope hang loose as his confidence and skill increase.

Helping the Child Learn to Walk (cont.)

8.

Have the child hold one end of a short rope. Drop your end of the rope. Say and sign COME. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Praise the child when he tries. Be there to catch him if he falls.

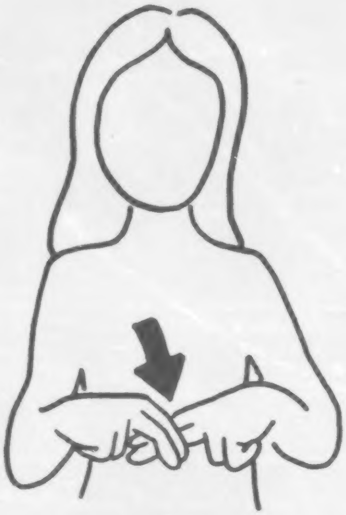
9. When the child can take a few steps holding on to something, encourage him to let go. Stretch out your arms toward him. Say and sign COME. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. Praise him if he tries. Pat him. Hug him. Say and sign GOOD. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign.



Helping the Child Learn to Sit in a Chair

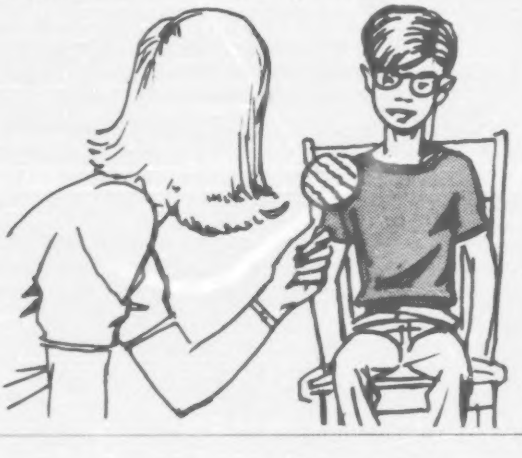
1. Say and sign SIT. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

SIT



2. Sit on your knees on the floor behind the child. Place your hands on his waist and gently pull him down on to your lap.

3. Choose a chair that is small enough to let the child's feet touch the floor. Use a chair with rubber tips or place it on a rug. Help him back into it. Help him hold on to the sides of the chair to steady himself. Praise him. Give him something special to eat or play with while he is sitting down.



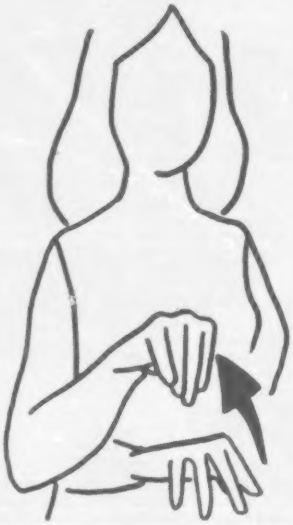
4. Place a chair next to a table or wall. Let the child touch the chair. Say and sign SIT. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

Help the child back into the chair. Have him use the wall or table for support. Make it fun for him. Give him something to play with.

Helping the Child Learn to Squat

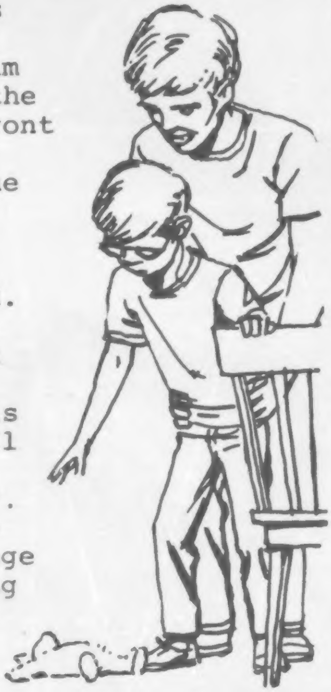
1. Say and sign PICK IT UP. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

PICK IT UP

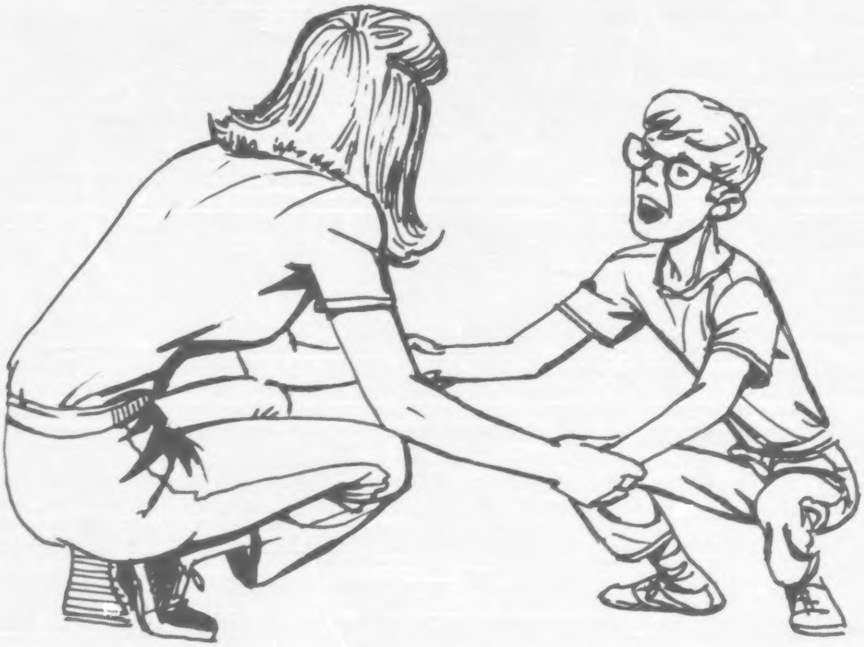


2. While the child is standing, show him a toy. Name it. Let him touch it. Then drop the toy on the floor in front of him. Say and sign PICK IT UP. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

Stand behind the child. Put your hands on his hips and push the back of his knees forward. Help the child keep his balance. Have him pull himself up by holding on to the bed or chair. Look for daily activities that will encourage squatting, like picking up his shoes or toys.



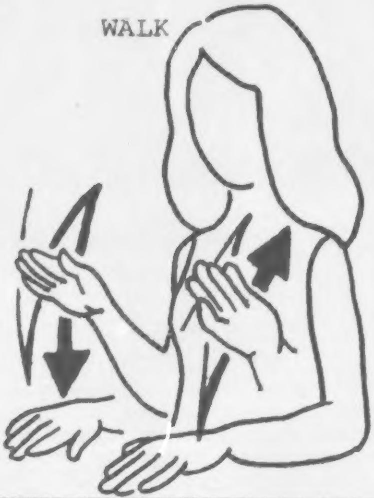
3. Take the child's hands while facing him. Then squat down. Help him squat. Then stand up and pull him up. Make a game of it. Keep it fun.



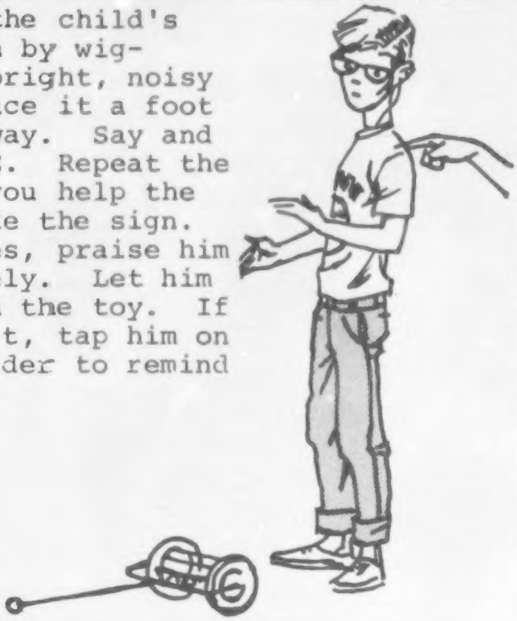
Helping the Child Walk Longer Distances

1. Don't carry the child. Let him crawl if he gets tired of walking. The effort will help him get stronger and more independent.

2. Say and sign WALK. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.



3. Get the child's attention by wiggling a bright, noisy toy. Place it a foot or two away. Say and sign COME. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. If he does, praise him immediately. Let him play with the toy. If he doesn't, tap him on the shoulder to remind him.



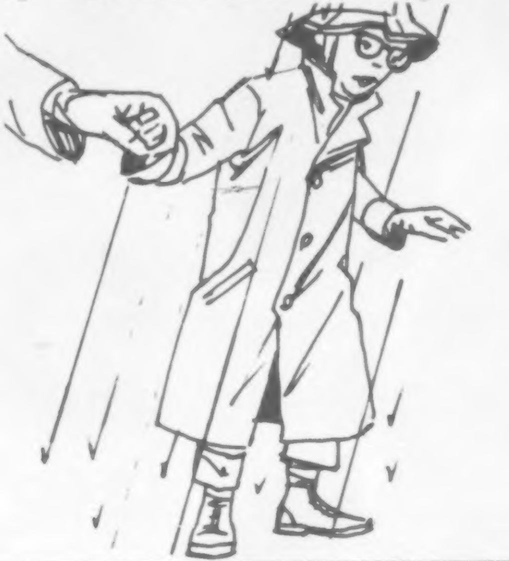
4.

Take the child outdoors on a smooth, level surface. Move a few feet away. Say and sign COME. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Praise him when he comes. He may be unsteady at first. Be prepared to catch him.

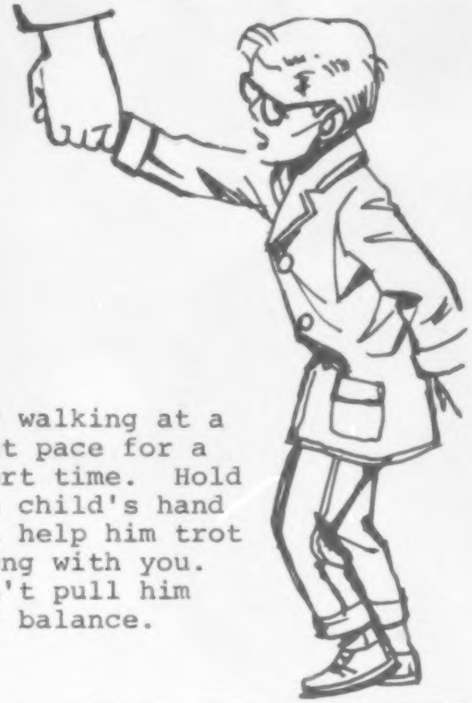
After the child has become familiar with the out-of-doors, try letting him walk on rougher surfaces. Try dirt and grass. Go uphill and downhill.

Helping the Child Walk Longer Distances (cont.)

5. Take the child for a walk every day. Walk for fifteen or twenty minutes. Say and sign WALK. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.



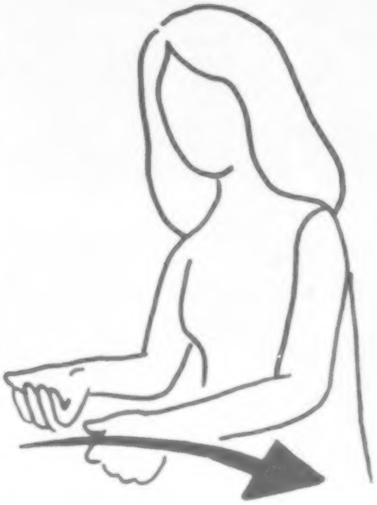
6.



Try walking at a fast pace for a short time. Hold the child's hand and help him trot along with you. Don't pull him off balance.

7. Say and sign PULL. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

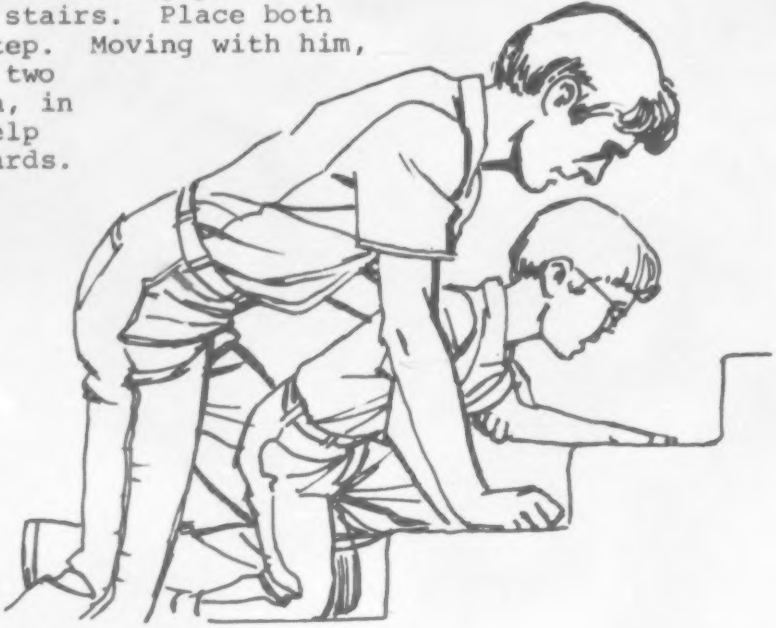
PULL



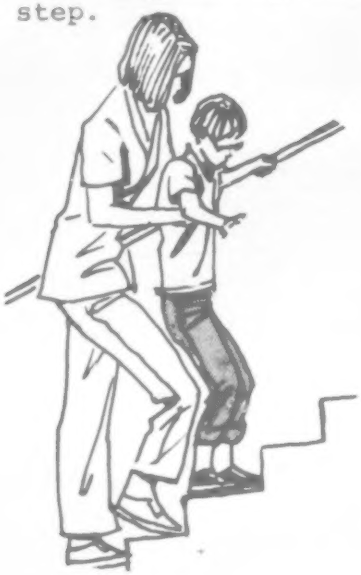
8. Help the child pull a wagon or a buggy as he walks. Say and sign PULL. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Praise him when he tries. Play with him for a few minutes. The child's reward is your attention.

Helping the Child Learn to Go Up Stairs

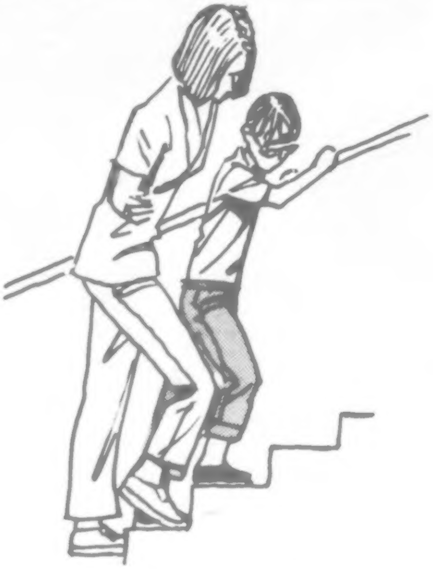
1. Put the child in a crawling position at the bottom of the stairs. Place both hands on the first step. Moving with him, help the child go up two or three steps. Then, in the same position, help him crawl down backwards.



2. Walk behind the child with your hands on his shoulders and your knees nudging his. Help him put first one foot and then the other on the first step. When both feet are securely on the step, help him up to the next step.



3. Walk behind the child nudging his knees with yours, one at a time. Help him put his right foot on the bottom step and his left foot on the next step. Then move his right foot to the third step and his left to the fourth.



Teaching the Child to Go Down Stairs

1. Hold the child's hand. Walk down the stairs beside him. Let him feel secure with both feet on one step before stepping down, one foot at a time.

2. Stand in front of the child facing her. Hold one hand on the rail. Encourage the child to step down. Praise her when she does. When the child has both feet on the step, you step backwards. Help the child step down on to the next step.

INTRODUCTION TO EATING

Praise is important to every child. Use it often. You want the child to learn to feed himself. He needs praise. Praise him just for trying.

Pat him on the shoulder. Say and sign his name and GOOD. Your approval will make him want to learn.

In the beginning, every child spills food. For example, it takes time and practice to learn to hold a cup upright and set it down. Spills are to be expected. The child learns by doing these things himself. At first, accidents will happen. Neatness and good manners will come with time.

If the child does not like to eat or is very messy, it's hard to enjoy eating together. You can help him learn to eat and develop good table manners. Work in a quiet setting. Avoid interruptions. Movement and noise may bother the child and make it hard for him to eat. Make sure you have enough time to be relaxed. Don't rush. Give both of you time.

Encourage the child to try to do things for himself. Learning to feed himself is more important for the child than being neat. It may seem easier for you to do everything for him. When he spills food, it takes time to clean up afterward. Have the child help clean up the food he spills. Let him eat without a bib. This may dirty his clothes, but it will help him know when he spills his food. Any child needs practice if he is to learn. Let him try. Praise him when he tries.

As you teach the child to feed himself, he will also be learning the language he needs.

Begin by using one word such as "Eat," or "Finished." When he knows these words, try using short phrases like "Time to eat!"

Always say and sign words with the action or food. When you do this, it helps the child understand. Connecting the food with the word and the sign will help him learn.

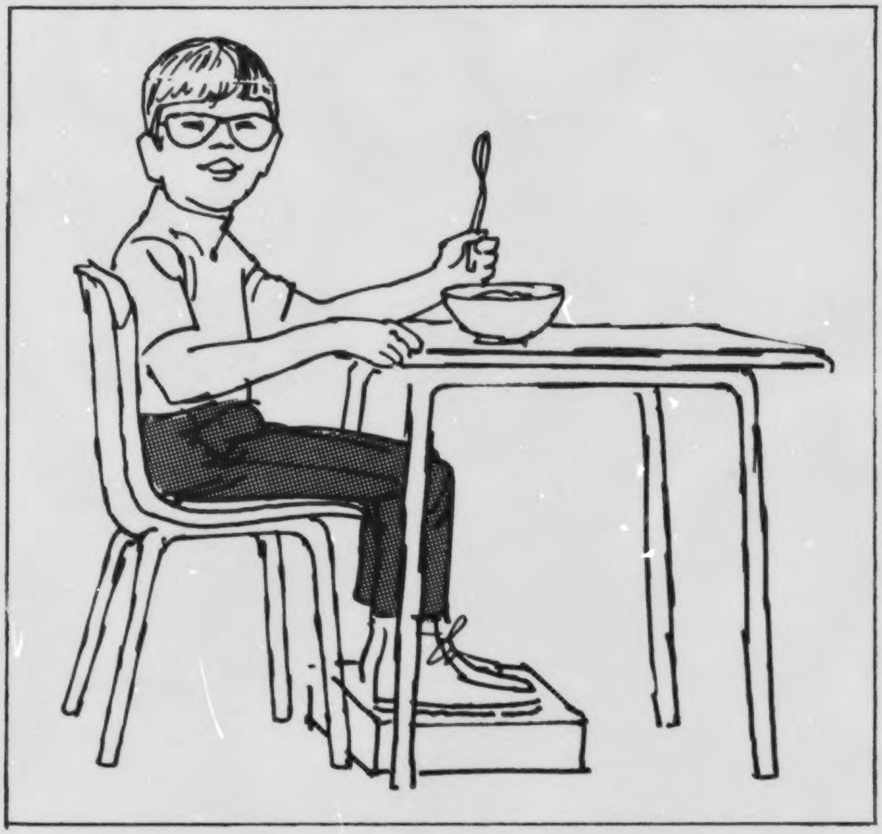
Stand in front of the child to speak and sign. Then move behind him to help him eat. If you must remind the child, move in front of him again. Repeat both the word and the sign. Then, say the word as you help the child make the sign.

Learning Through Repetition

Any child learns best when things are repeated. Following the same routine each mealtime will make learning easier. Repeat the same actions, the same words, and the same signs. Frequent repetition will make it easier for the child to learn.

The child's sitting position at the table is important. Have him sit in a chair that fits. The child's hips and knees should be bent. His feet should touch the floor. If they don't, support them with a box or stool. He should be leaning slightly forward.

If the child cannot sit by himself, prop him up in a chair or feeding table. Every child should be sitting

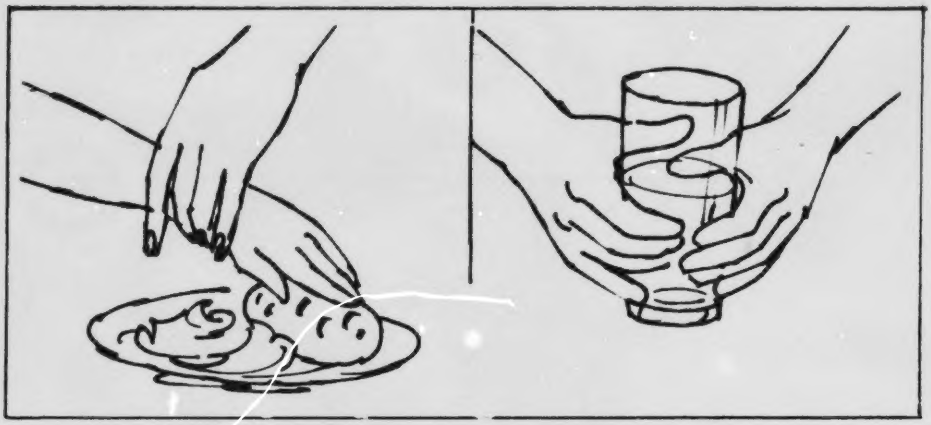


up to eat. If he lacks head control, make sure the back of the chair is high enough to give him some support.

Learning Through Touch

If the child has no vision, help him use his hand to find the plate and touch the food. Don't let him play with it, but do let him identify it by touch.

It might help to place the food in the same place on his plate for every meal. You could put the meat on the right, the vegetable on the left, and the salad and bread above this. When food is in the same place each time, it will be easier for the child to learn to feed himself.



A soft, plastic glass, narrow enough for the child to get his hand around, will make it easier for him to learn to drink. If the child needs to use two hands to hold the glass, let him.

Using Utensils

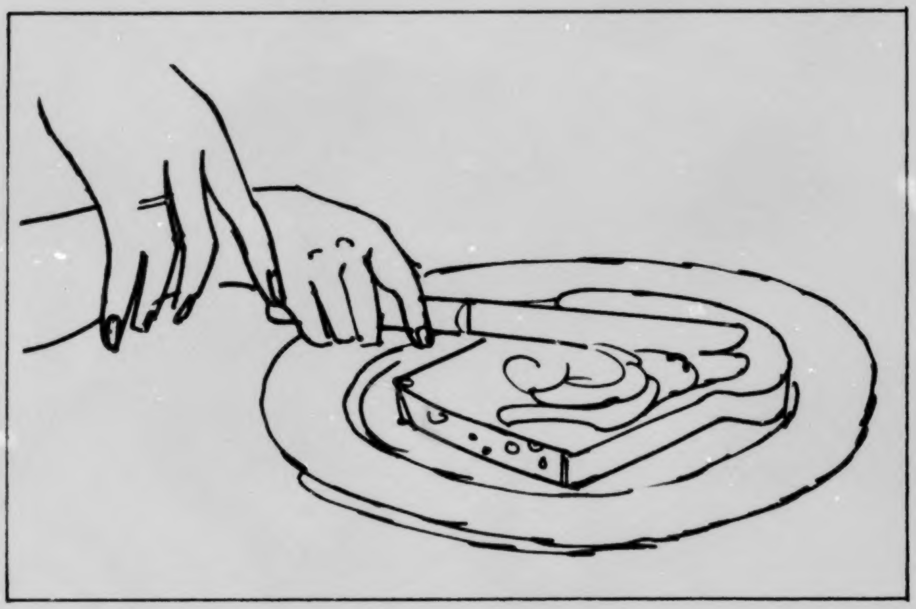
Children who cannot easily hold silverware may need specially designed orthopedic spoons or utensils. The scooping action with these utensils may be different than with a regular spoon. Or, attaching a regular spoon to the child's hand or wrist may change the scooping motion. Use the orthopedic utensils only when recommended by the therapist.

Use regular spoons and forks as much as possible. Then the child will only have to learn one set of eating skills. It will be easier for you both.

Never put your finger in a child's mouth. He may bite you. Use a tongue depressor, a rubber spatula, or the tip of a spoon.

Flexible plastic dishes, bowls, and glasses are worry proof. They will not break. The child can handle them safely by himself.

Never leave the child alone when he is using a knife. To teach him to use a knife, start with a flat table knife or butter knife for spreading. Make sure the knife has smooth edges. When the child is learning to cut, you can introduce a table knife with a serrated or saw-tooth edge. When he handles these knives well, he is ready to learn to use a sharper knife.



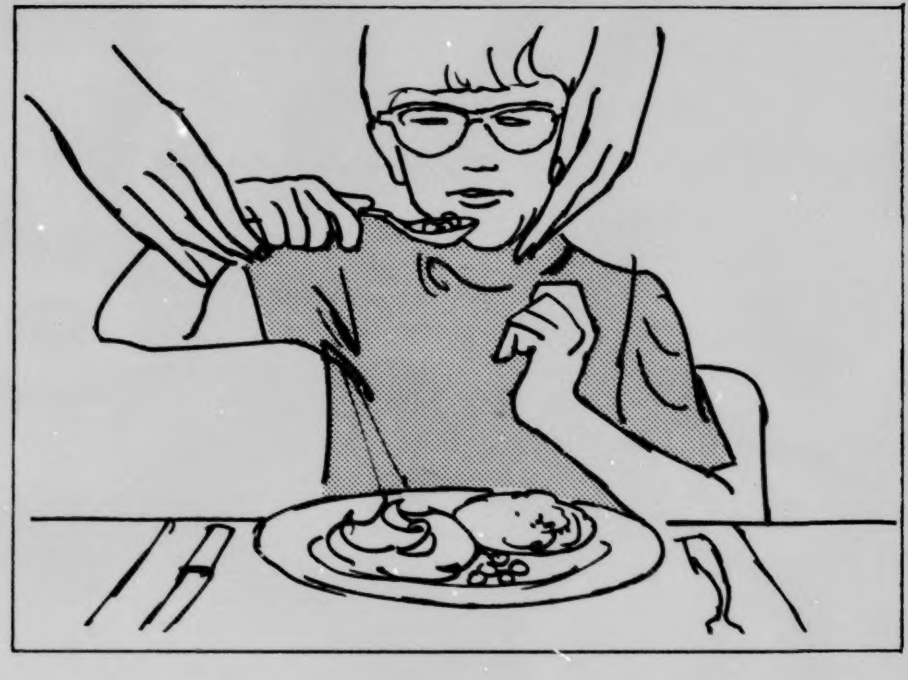
All children need a balanced diet. This means they must eat a variety of foods. These foods have different tastes and textures. Some children may not want to accept new textures and tastes. You may have problems moving them from soft foods to lumpy foods and then on to finger foods.

Don't give up. The children must learn to chew in order to eat a variety of foods.

Give him small bite-size pieces when he is first learning to chew. After the child will accept these, try giving him larger pieces. Later, offer him whole pieces of toast, or half a sandwich. The child needs to learn to bite off pieces of food with his front teeth. He needs to learn to chew with his back teeth.

If the child refuses to eat a new food, insist that he try some. Don't try to make him eat it all. You just want him to taste it.

Keep your hand on the side of his head for support and control. If the child throws his head back, don't push it forward. Just bring his arms down to waist level and hold them there. This will bring his shoulders forward and help him relax.



Handle the child firmly but gently. After a few tastes, he will probably learn to accept the foods you offer.

At every meal, offer the child some food he likes. Go slowly. Allow him time to chew and swallow. Don't offer too much at a time. Start by giving him very small portions of everything.

Praise him when he eats it all. Your approval will give him a good feeling. Your praise will make him want to clean his plate.

When he eats everything on his plate, offer him more. Encourage him to try to tell you or show you what he wants. Let him choose food he likes.

If the child is unwilling to eat, season the food in different ways. Begin with a little salt. Try ketchup, mustard, or a variety of sauces. See if the child's interest in food increases. If a child is on a special diet, check with the dietician before you add anything to his food.

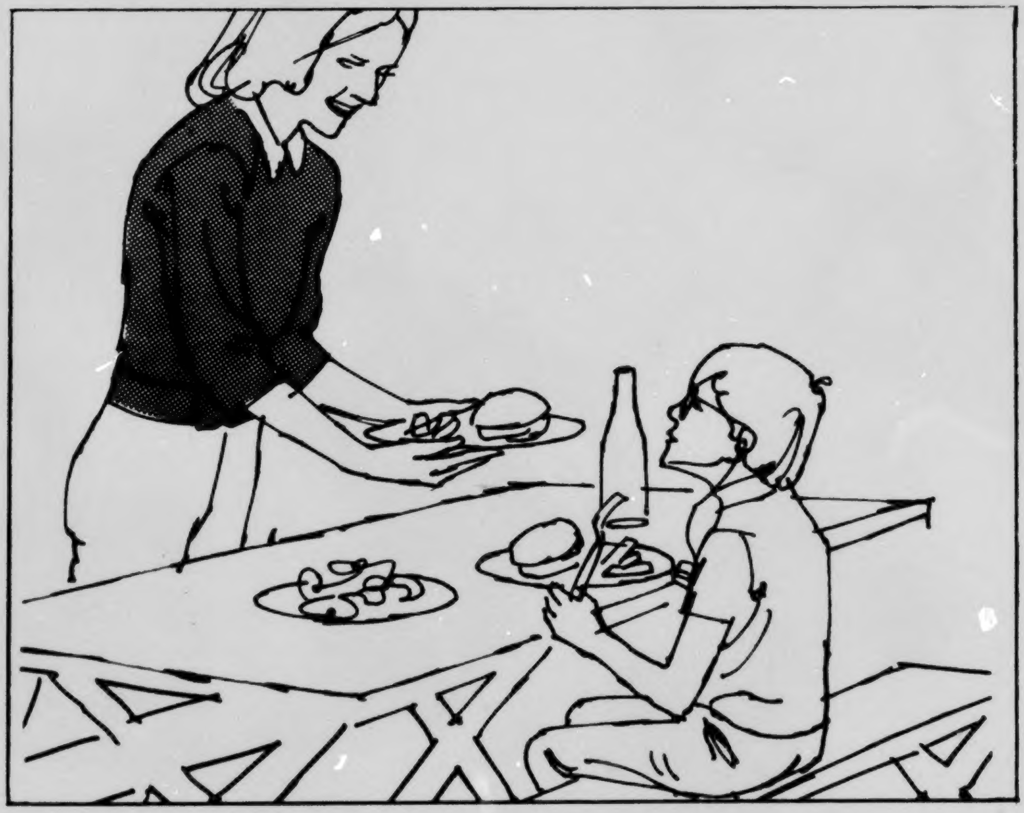
Most residential centers have pre-set menus for everyone. But if you have the chance to choose, or to plan ahead, we suggest some sample menus. They are included with the activities for developing eating skills.

We have also suggested foods that are easy to prepare. Let the child help you get his food ready to eat. It may increase his interest in food. He may be more willing to touch new foods and to taste them, when he has helped prepare them.

If you have a small kitchen available, let the child help you wash the dishes and put them away. Let

him set the table and clear it. These activities are all part of being independent.

Try taking the children out to eat. Choose a small restaurant to begin with. One with outdoor tables is good. You can be relaxed and not worry about spills.



Order food the child likes. Let him try what he wants. This is a good time for him to eat sandwiches or other finger foods like potato chips, french fries , or pickles.

Never drag, pull, or carry a child to the dining room. Being independent about eating includes being able to get to and from the dining room.

Try the buddy system. Pair a partially sighted child with a child who has no vision. Have them hold hands and walk to the dining room together. Or, try using guide ropes.

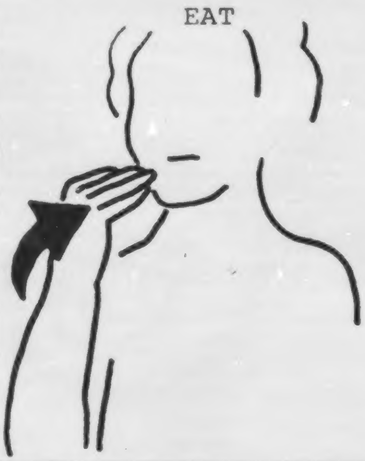
Always encourage the child to move on his own. Each step a child takes on his own is a step towards independence.

Remind the child where he is going when he lags behind. Use signs. Use words. Say and sign where to go and what to do. When you use language, you help the child understand what you want. It will help him learn what you expect him to do. It will help him learn the words and the signs he needs to know.

Feeding the Child from a Spoon

1. If the child is still on a bottle, thicken the milk with cereal, soup, or soy powder. He will learn to accept thicker foods and a variety of flavors.

2. Always say and sign EAT before you feed the child. Repeat the word as you take his hand and help him make the sign.

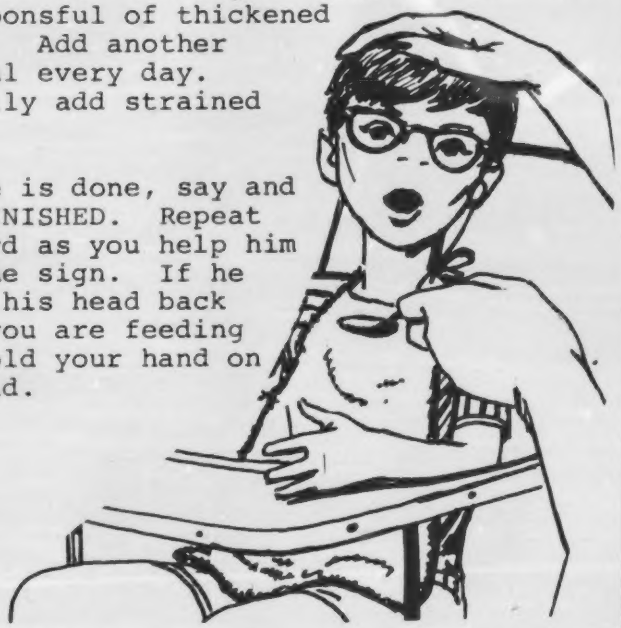


3. SUGGESTED MENU FOR STRAINED FOODS:

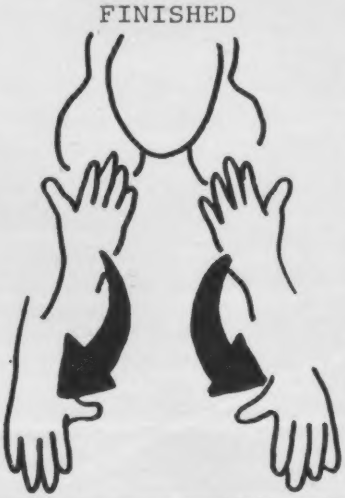
BREAKFAST:	Cooked oatmeal or cream of wheat, thinned with milk. Soft boiled or poached egg.
LUNCH:	Cooked vegetable, strained or blended. Cottage cheese, mashed smooth and thinned with milk. Strained or mashed fruit.
DINNER:	Cooked vegetable, green or yellow, strained or blended. Mashed potato, thinned with milk. Pureed meat.
SNACKS:	Juice or mashed fruit once or twice a day.
MILK:	3-4 cups a day. Some authorities recommend non-fat or low-fat milk.

4. Seat the child upright to feed him. Say and sign EAT. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. Feed him one or two spoonsful of thickened food. Add another spoonful every day. Gradually add strained foods.

When he is done, say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. If he throws his head back while you are feeding him, hold your hand on his head.

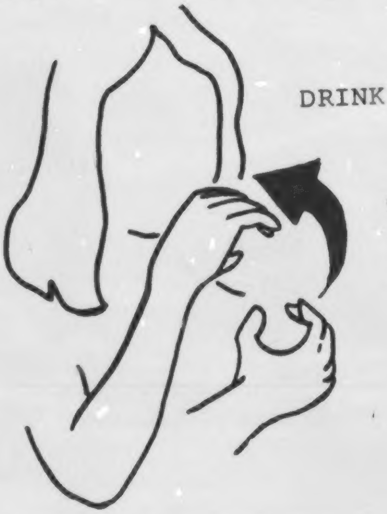


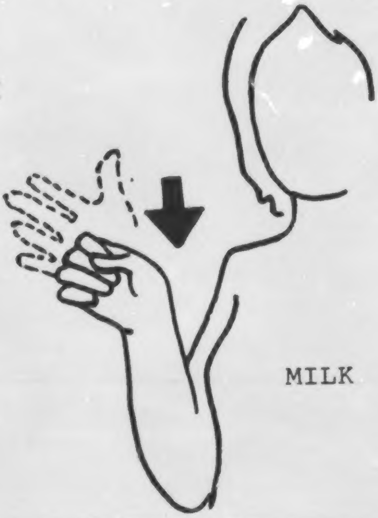
5. When the child is through eating, say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you take his hands and help him make the sign.

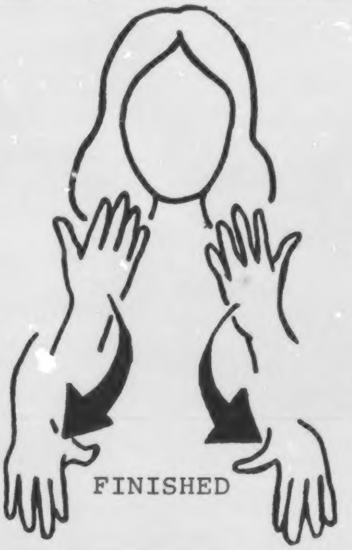


Teaching the Child to Drink from a Cup

1. Always say and sign DRINK before offering the cup to the child. Repeat the word as you help her make the sign.





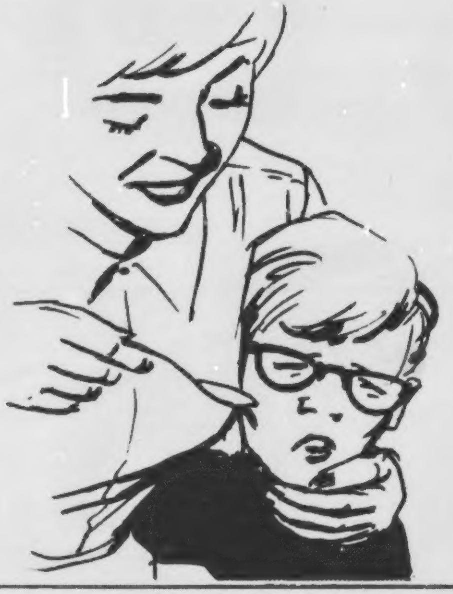


2. Place some liquid in a flexible cup. Say and sign DRINK. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Place your hands over the child's to help her hold the glass. If the liquid runs out of her mouth, gently press her upper lip down on the rim of the cup. Make sure she is sitting up straight with feet supported.

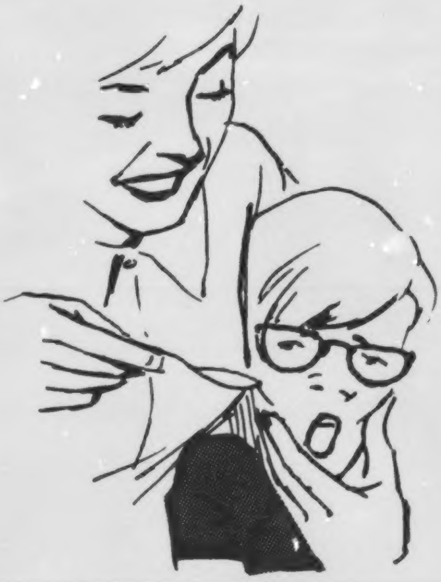
Changing the Child's Eating Habits

1. He will resist new foods. But if you are determined, you will succeed. Be firm. Be persistent. Try these suggestions:

2. Nest his head under your arm with your hand under his chin.

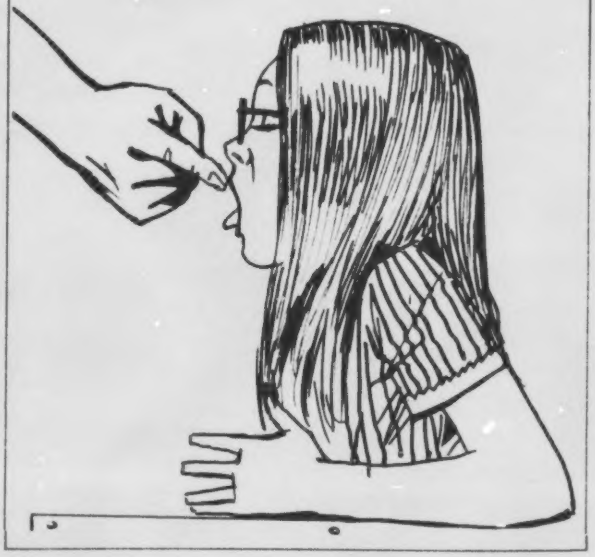


3. If he won't open his mouth, squeeze his cheeks.



4. If he spits the food out, feed him another spoonful.

5. If she gags, tap her lips with your fingers. If she vomits, wipe it up. Feed her a new spoonful.



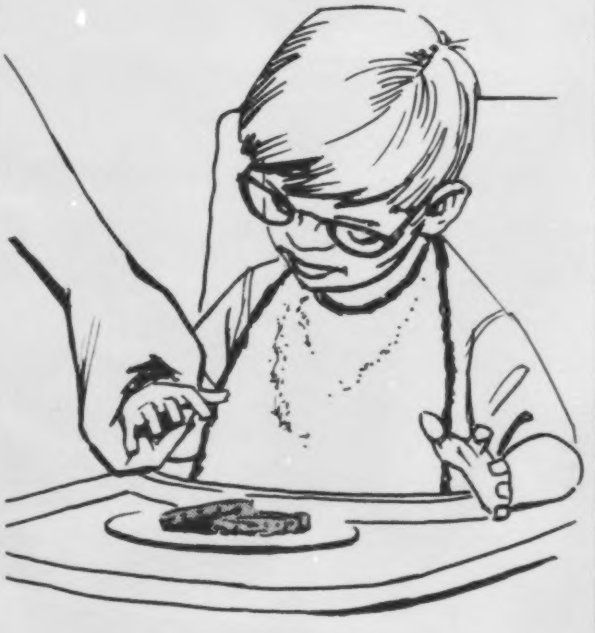
Helping the Child Learn to Eat Finger Foods

1. Before the child can learn to bite and chew, he needs to learn to put the food in his mouth. Finger foods will give him the practice he needs.

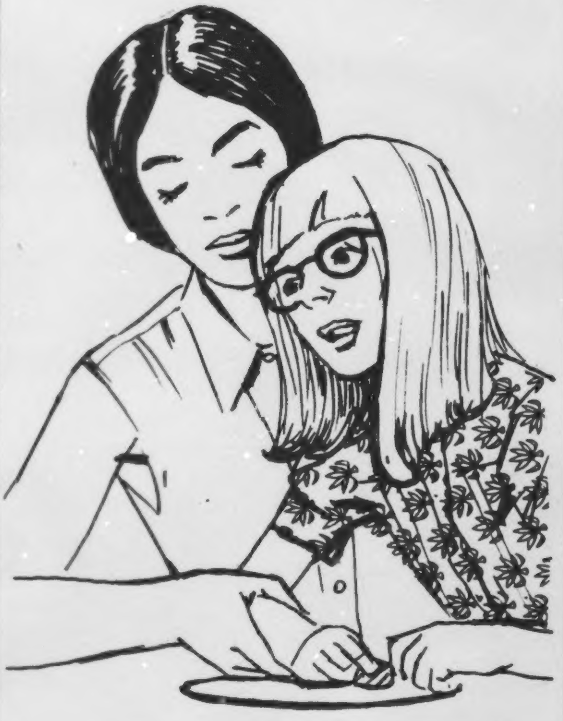
2. SUGGESTED MENU FOR FINGER FOODS:

BREAKFAST:	Cubes of toast or bits of dry cereal. Chopped fruit. Try apples, canned pears, peaches or banana. Cooked oatmeal, cream of wheat or instant cereal mixed with milk. Half a cup of milk.
LUNCH:	Finely chopped meat or cottage cheese. Chopped green or yellow cooked vegetable. Cubes of toast or a cracker. Chopped fruit. Milk pudding. Half a cup of milk.
DINNER:	Vegetable soup or stew. Bread with peanut butter or cottage cheese. Chopped fruit. Half a cup of milk.

3. Seat the child at the table. Stand or sit behind him. Say and sign EAT. Help him make the sign. Put your hand over his and help him find his food. Let him touch the food with his finger to identify it. Then, help him pick it up.

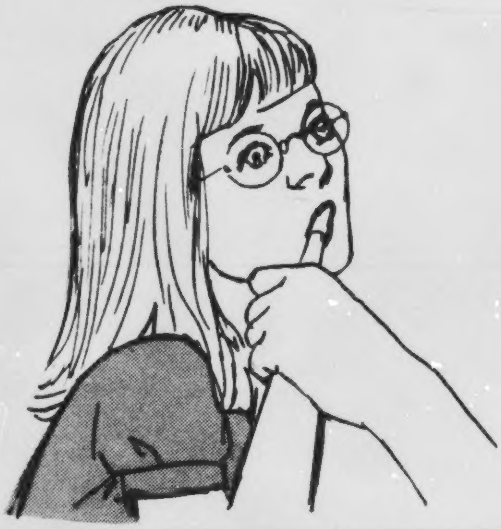


4. Sit behind the child at the table. Say and sign EAT. Help her sign EAT. Place your hand lightly on her forearm if she needs help in finding her food.

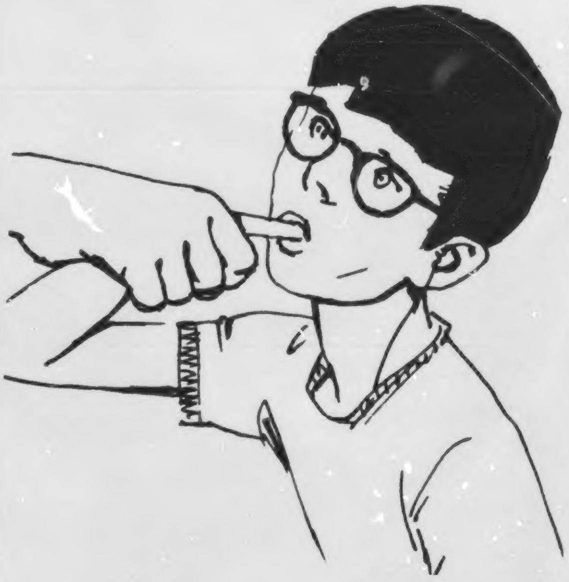


Preparing the Child for Chewing

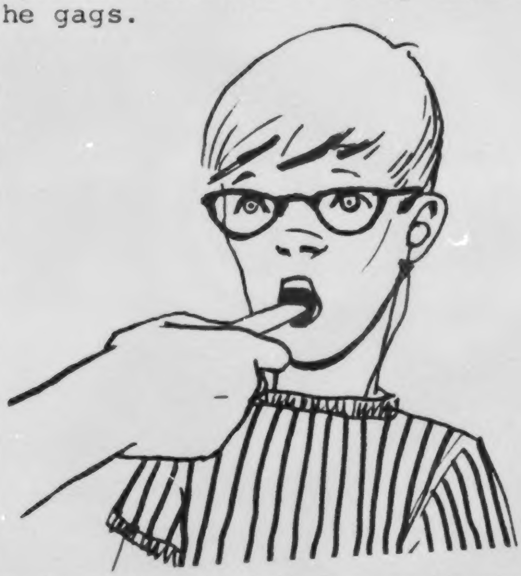
1. Before feeding the child, place her fingertips on her lips. Do this several times, gently but firmly. Then open her mouth. Use her finger if necessary.



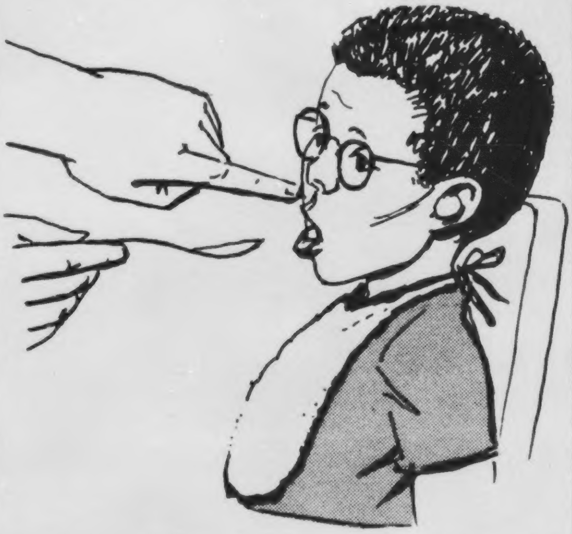
2. Using the child's fingers, help him massage his gums. Do this firmly, but gently.



3. If the child gags on his food, try tongue walking. Open his mouth and walk a tongue depressor back from the tip of his tongue. Go a little farther each time. Stop before he gags.



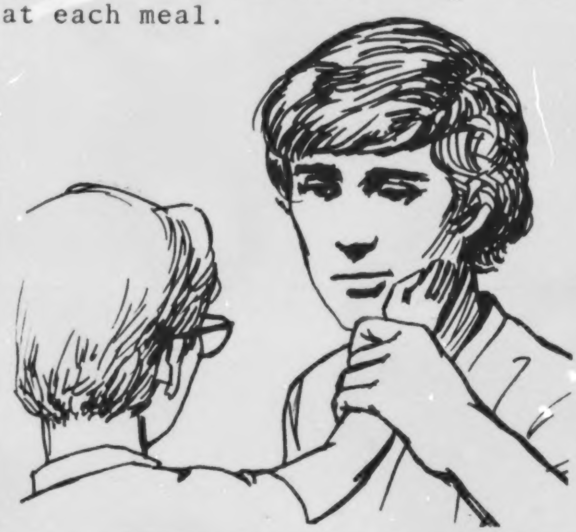
4. Place a small piece of food on the middle of the child's tongue. If he doesn't close his mouth, press or rub his upper lip. Press tip of spoon down on the tongue and pull it straight out from between his lips.



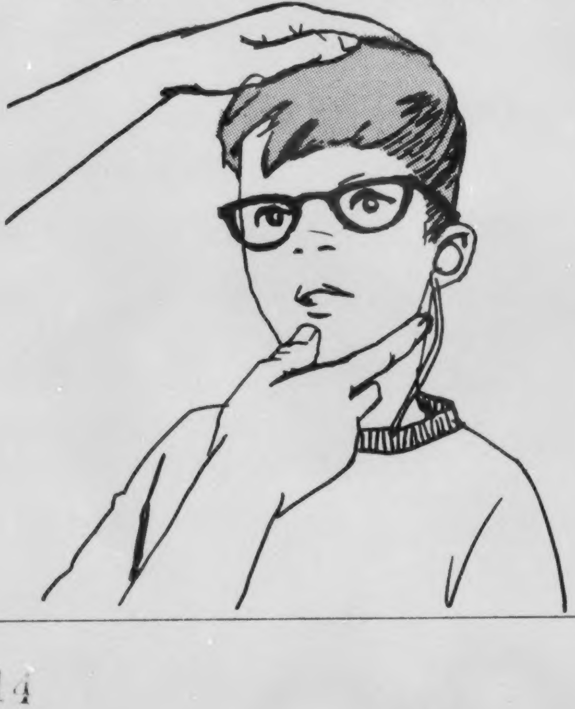
Teaching the Child to Chew

1. Seat the child at the table. Place a box under his feet if he can't reach the floor. It will give him a feeling of support and security.

2. Sit beside the child and take a bite of food. Place the child's hands on your jaw. Chew in an exaggerated way. Now give the child a bite of food and put his hands on his own face. Try this at each meal.



3. If the child will not imitate you, you must move his jaw for him. To do this, place your middle finger under his jaw. Place your index finger along his jawline and your thumb on his chin. Use your thumb and middle finger to move his jaw up and down in a chewing motion. Your index finger will help him move his jaw in a circular motion. Keep your other hand on top of his head. As he begins to chew, gradually remove your fingers. Release your index finger first. When he can move his jaw up and down, remove all help.



Teaching the Child to Accept a Variety of Foods

1. Insist that she try new foods. Every child needs a varied diet to develop a strong, healthy body. If you persist, she will begin to accept new foods more easily.

2. SUGGESTED MENU FOR CHEWING: Cut all food into bite-size pieces.

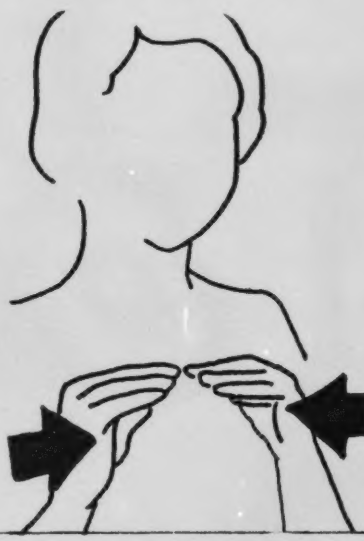
	BREAKFAST	LUNCH	DINNER
PROTEIN	Egg	Meat, Fish, Chicken	Cottage Cheese, Peanut Butter
VEGETABLE		Squash or Carrots	Spinach, Broccoli or other green vegetable
FRUIT	Orange Juice	Banana or other fresh fruit	Canned or cooked fruit
STARCH	Toast	2 small crackers	Slice bread
	Milk	Milk	Milk

SNACKS: Juice or milk. Crackers. Fruit. A plain cookie. Sweets may cause the child to drool.

3. Serve "fun food" occasionally. Try potato chips, unsweetened dry cereals, or animal crackers. Give the child one small piece. Say and sign EAT. Repeat the word as you help her make the sign. Guide her arm towards the food by tapping her on the elbow with your fingertips.

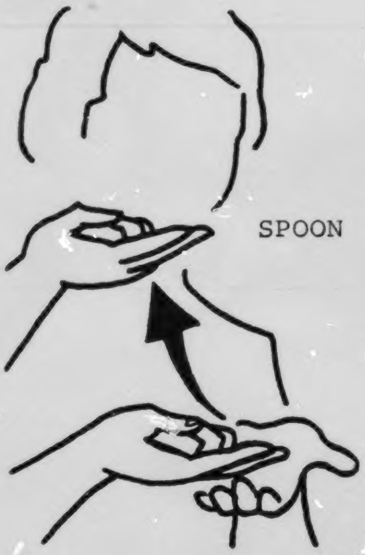
4. Say and sign MORE before you give the child another piece. Repeat the word as you take her hands and help her make the sign.

MORE



Teaching the Child to Feed Himself from a Spoon

1. Say and sign SPOON before you feed the child. Repeat the word as you take his hand and help him make the sign.



2. Seat the child at the table. Make sure his feet touch the floor. Support him if necessary. Say and sign EAT and then SPOON. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. Put your hand over his and help him find the spoon. Keep your hand over his as he scoops food toward mouth.

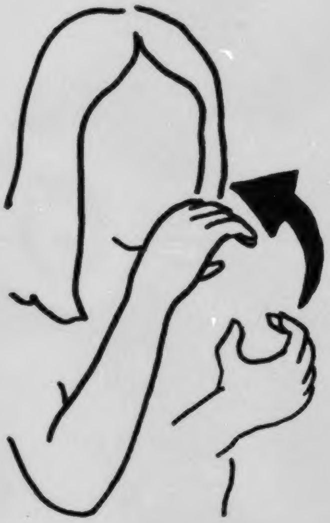
3. Learning to scoop up food takes time. Keep your hand over the child's to help him balance the spoon. As his skill increases, encourage him to try by himself.

4. Sit behind the child at the table. Say and sign EAT and SPOON. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. If he does not reach for the spoon, repeat the sign and tap him gently on the arm.

Teaching the Child to Drink from a Cup

1. Always say and sign DRINK before handing the cup to the child. Repeat the word as you take his hand and help him make the sign.

DRINK



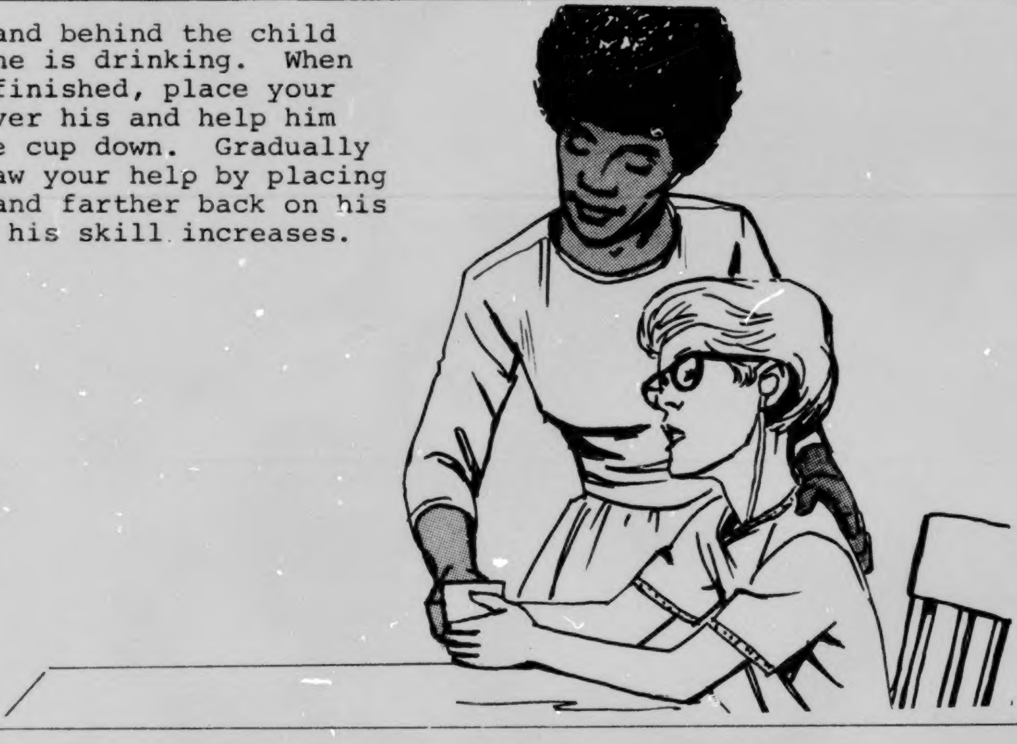
2. Seat the child at the table and stand behind him. Say and sign DRINK. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. Then take both of his hands in yours and help him find his cup. Use a cup that is small enough for him to hold easily. Help him pick it up. When he is through drinking, help him set the cup down.

3. Sit beside the child at the table. Say and sign DRINK. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. Place your hand lightly on his forearm and help him find his cup. When he is through drinking, help him set the cup down.

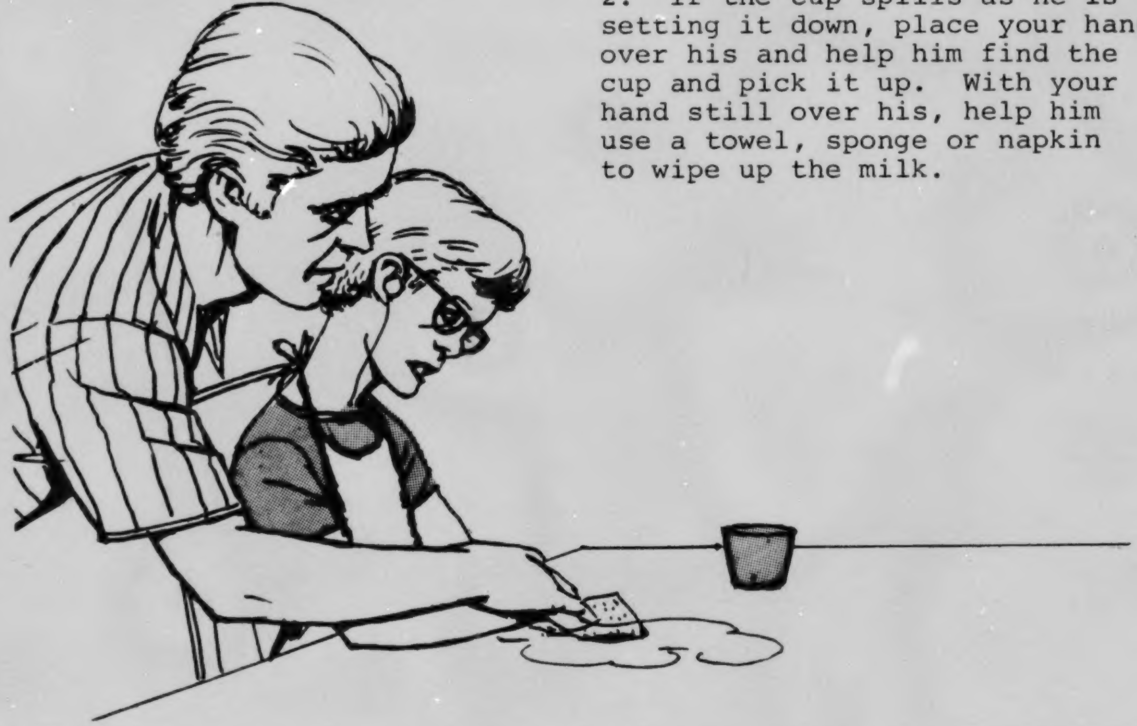
4. Sit beside the child at the table. Say and sign DRINK. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. Give the child time to respond. If he doesn't, guide his arm toward the cup by touching his elbow lightly with your fingertips. When he is through drinking, help him set the cup down.

Helping the Child Learn to Set His Cup Down

1. Stand behind the child while he is drinking. When he is finished, place your hand over his and help him set the cup down. Gradually withdraw your help by placing your hand farther back on his arm as his skill increases.



2. If the cup spills as he is setting it down, place your hand over his and help him find the cup and pick it up. With your hand still over his, help him use a towel, sponge or napkin to wipe up the milk.

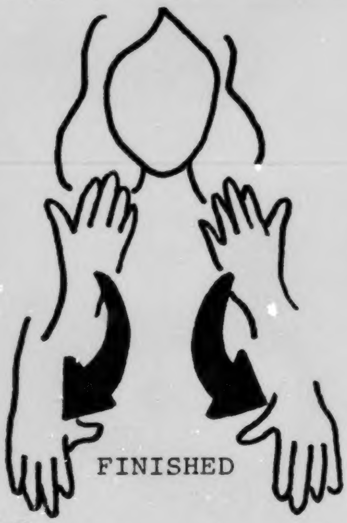


Teaching the Child to Use a Napkin

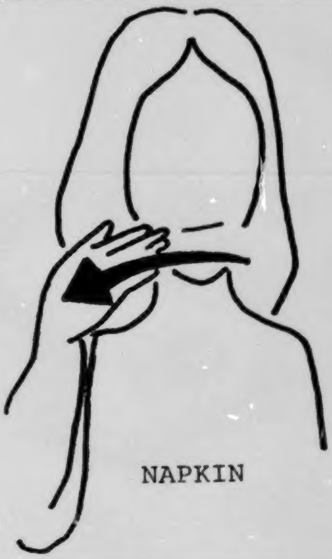
1. The child should learn to use a napkin, even if a bib is used.

2. When the meal is over, say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

Then say and sign NAPKIN. Repeat the word as you take the child's hand and help him make the sign.



FINISHED



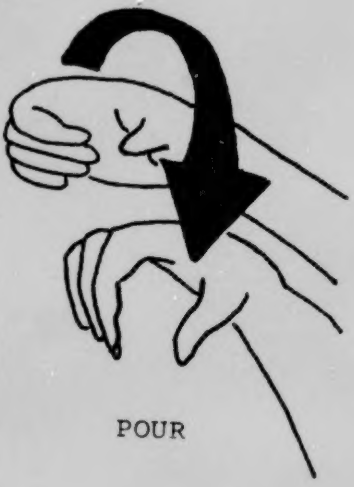
NAPKIN

3. When the meal is over, say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word and help the child make the sign. Then say and sign NAPKIN. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

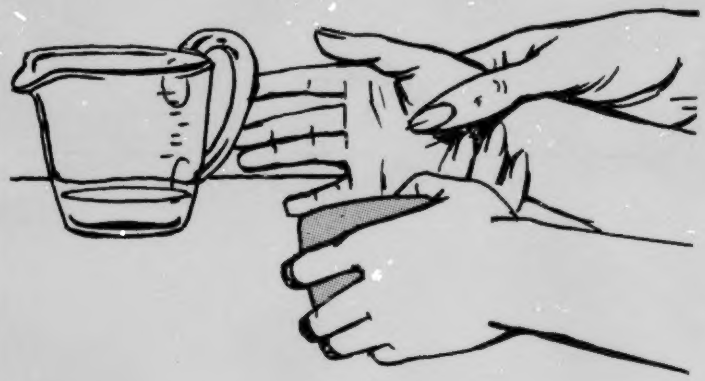
Put your hand over his and help him find his napkin. Keep your hand over his as you help him wipe his mouth. As he becomes more skilled, gradually withdraw your help.

Helping the Child Learn to Pour from a Pitcher

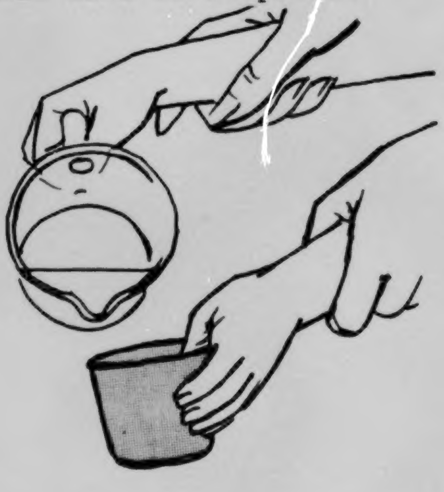
1. Say and sign POUR before you hand the child the pitcher. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign.



2. If the child has no vision, put his thumb over the top lip of the cup. Put your hand over his other hand and help him find the pitcher. Keep your hand over his and help him pick the pitcher up, move it over the cup, and pour. Use a small plastic pitcher or measuring cup with a lip and handle with very little liquid at first.



3. Say and sign POUR. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Place your hands on his arms just above the wrist and help him find the cup and pitcher. Keep your hands lightly on his arms as he pours.

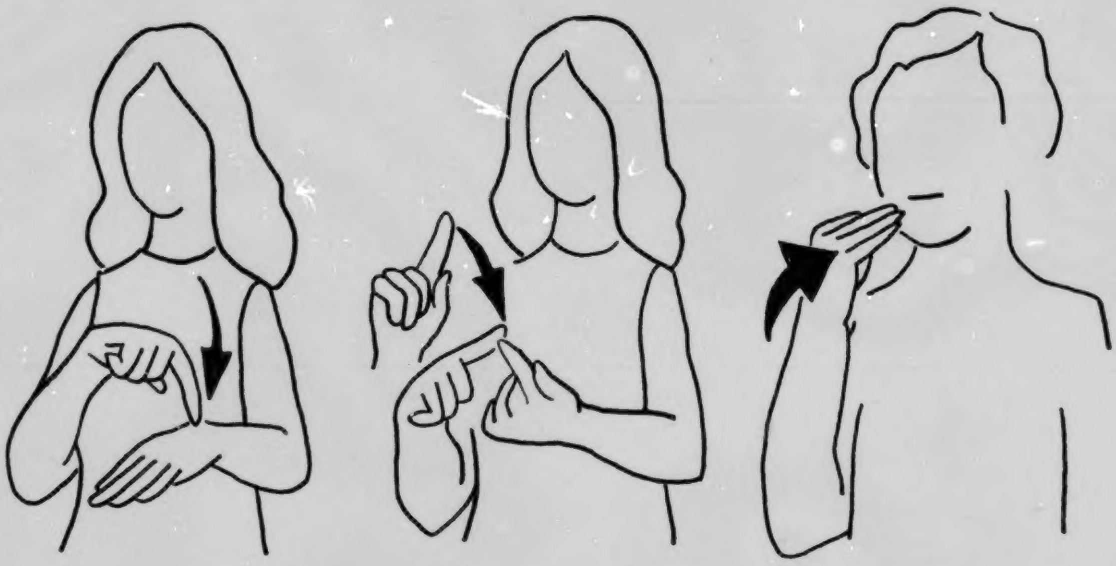


4. Say and sign POUR. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Give him time to act. If he does not reach for his cup and the pitcher, repeat the sign and tap him lightly on the elbow to remind him.

Teaching the Child to Set the Table

1. Tell the child it is TIME TO EAT.

Say and sign TIME. Then say and sign TO. Now say and sign EAT.

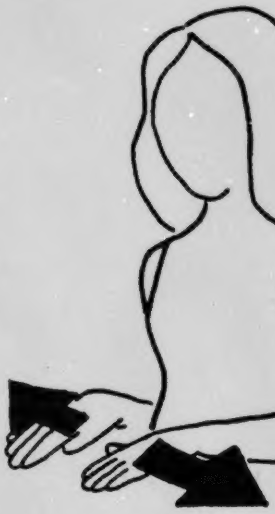


Repeat the words as you take the child's hands and help him repeat the signs.

2. Keep all dishes and supplies in the same place. Place your hands over the child's hands and help him select his own dishes and utensils. Keep your hands on his as you walk to the table and help him set them down.

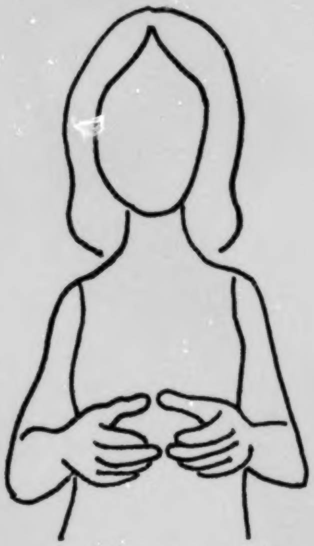
Teaching the Child to Set the Table (cont.)

3. Say and sign PLACE MAT. Repeat the word as you take his hands and help him make the sign.



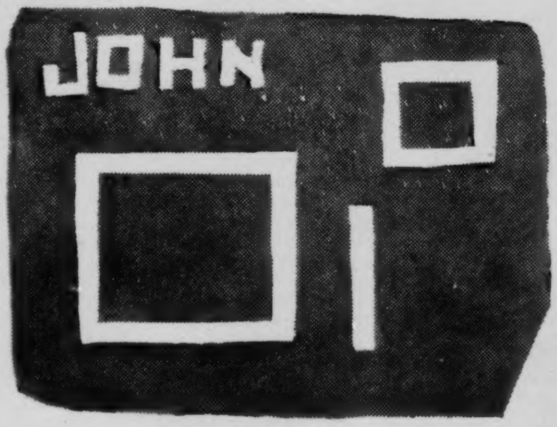
PLACEMAT

4. Say and sign PLATE. Repeat the word as you take his hands and help him make the sign.



PLATE

5. Outline places for the child's spoon, plate, and cup on his mat. This can be done quickly with iron-on tape on cloth or with braille on paper. Use brightly colored paper or cloth.



6. As the child gets used to the routine, let him do more and more by himself. If he needs guidance, place your hand lightly on his forearm as needed. Have him sit in the same place every day.

Teaching the Child to Set the Table (cont.)

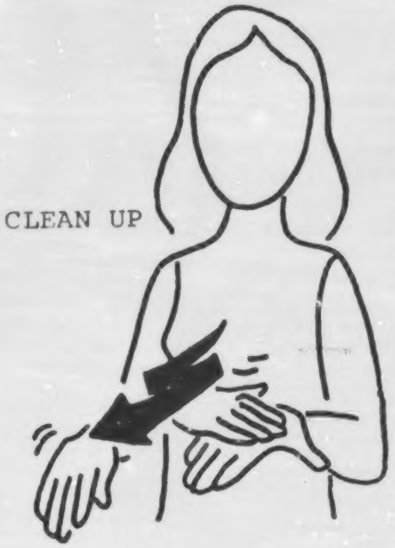
7. Gradually withdraw your help. Say and sign the word for each object. Help him make the signs. If he hesitates, tap him lightly on the elbow as a reminder.

8. For family style servings at a small table, it is often easier to use a tablecloth, rather than separate mats. Put your hands over hers and help her spread and smooth the cloth on the table.

9. For family style servings, the child can bring the dishes of food to the table. Put your hands on hers to help her carry the serving bowls to the table. As she becomes more skilled, let her do it by herself.

Teaching the Child to Clear the Table

1. Say and sign CLEAN UP. Repeat the words as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

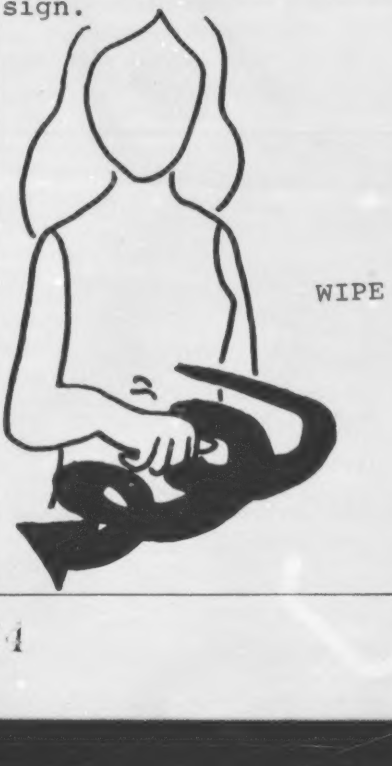


2. When the meal is over, say and sign CLEAN UP. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. Take his hands in yours and help him remove his dirty dishes from the table. Take them to the sink or counter where they will be washed.

If there is food to be scraped off, help him do that, too. As he becomes more skillful, gradually withdraw your support. Encourage the child to do it by himself.

3. After the table is cleared, help the child wipe it off. Say and sign WIPE. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. With your hands over his, help him pick up a damp cloth. Return to the table and wipe it off. Keep your hands over his and help him until he is able to do it alone. Praise him when he tries.

4. Say and sign WIPE. Repeat the word as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.



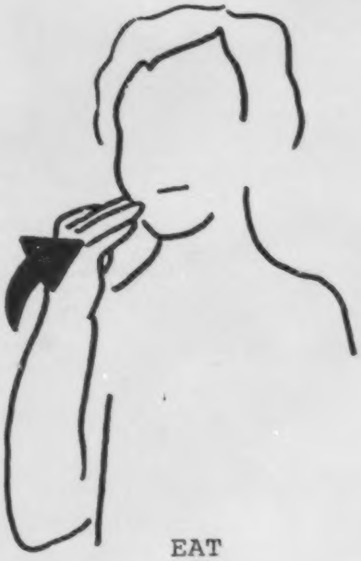
Teaching the Child to Clear the Table (cont.)

5. Napkins, mats, and tablecloths that need to be washed should be put in a hamper near the dish counter. Take the child's hands and help him carry the linen to the hamper and put it in. Gradually withdraw your help so that he does more and more by himself.

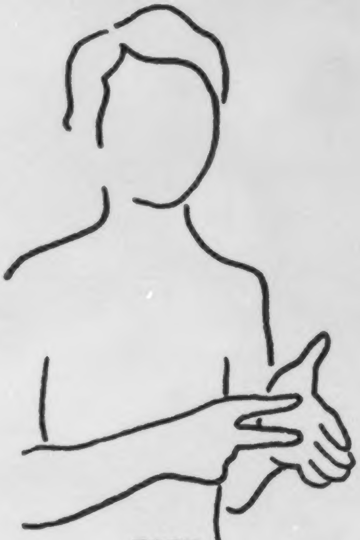
Teaching the Child to Eat with a Fork

1. Say and sign EAT. Repeat the word as you take the child's hand and help him make the sign.

Say and sign FORK. Repeat the word as you take the child's hand and help him make the sign.



EAT



FORK

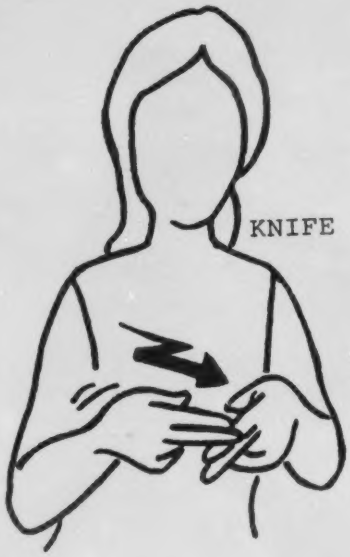
2. Say and sign EAT. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Then say and sign FORK. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. Place your hand over the child's and help him find his fork. Keep your hand over his as you pick it up and help him spear a piece of food. Make sure his food is cut into bite-size pieces. He may need a pusher. If so, let him use a piece of bread.

3. As the child's skill increases, encourage him to eat by himself. After you make the signs EAT and FORK, give the child time to act. If he does not pick up his fork and begin to eat, repeat the signs and tap him gently on the elbow as a reminder.

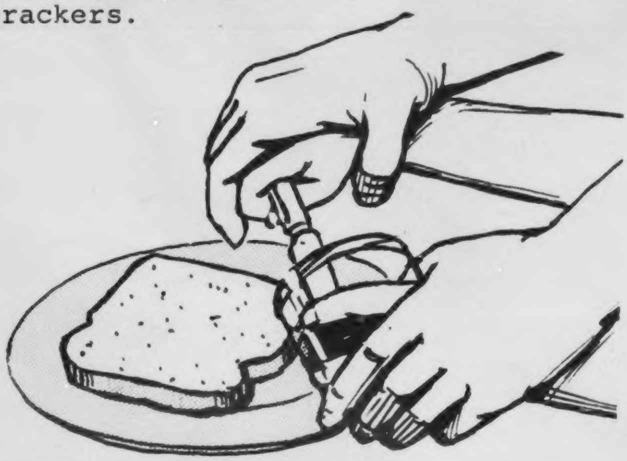
Now that he has learned to eat with a fork, expect him to use it.

Teaching the Child to Use a Knife to Spread Food

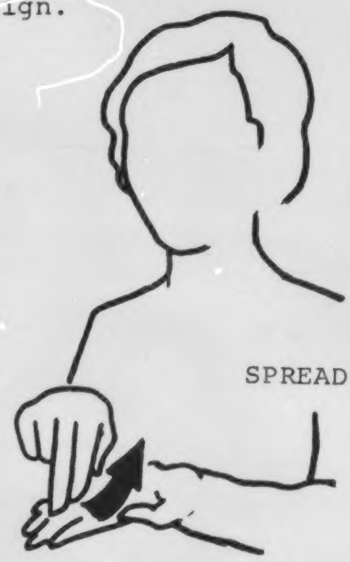
1. Say and sign KNIFE. Repeat the word as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.



2. Say and sign KNIFE. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Say and sign SPREAD. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Take the child's hands in yours. Help him find the jar and pick up the knife. Hold the jar with one hand and help him dip into it with the knife. Let him identify the food on the knife by touching or smelling it. Then, help him spread it on bread or crackers.



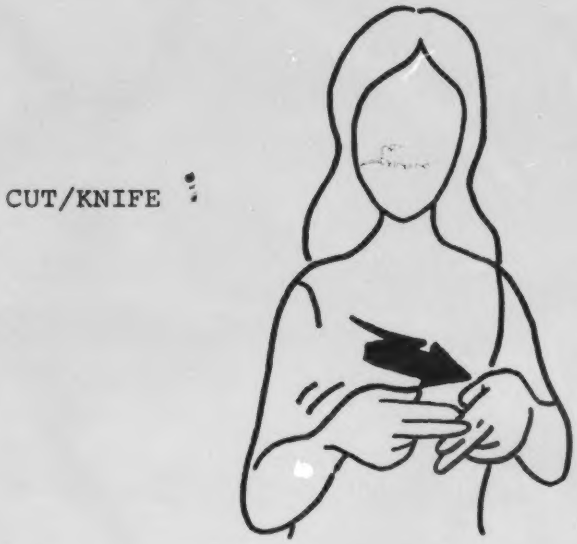
3. Say and sign SPREAD. Repeat the word as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.



4. As the child's skill increases, hold his arms loosely above the wrist. Help him use his knife to spread jelly, butter, peanut butter, mustard or ketchup. Let him do more and more by himself.

Teaching the Child to Cut His Food with a Knife

1. Say and sign CUT. Repeat the word as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.



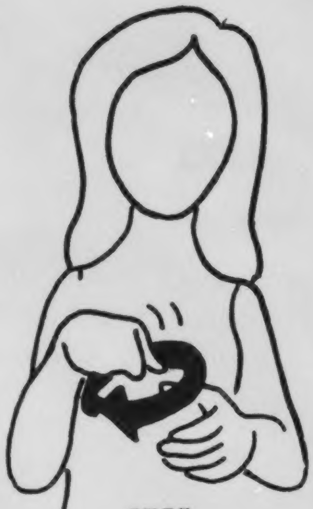
2. Begin with easy to cut foods. Try soft bread, cooked vegetables, sandwiches, or toast. Say and sign CUT. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

Take his hands in yours and help him pick up his knife. Holding his hands in yours, help him cut the food on his plate.

3. As the child's skill increases, gradually withdraw your help. Place your hands lightly on his arms to guide him as he cuts his food. Let him do more and more by himself.

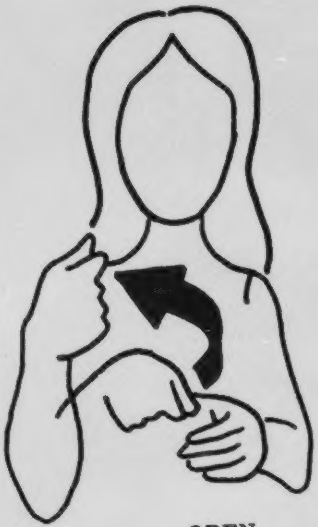
Teaching the Child to Prepare Foods

1. Say and sign STIR. Repeat the word as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.



STIR

2. Say and sign OPEN. Repeat the word as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.



OPEN

3. Begin with easy-to-prepare foods like instant pudding, Kool-Aid, frozen juices and soup.

Put your hands over the child's and help her through all of the actions: opening the package or can, pouring the food into a bowl, adding water or milk, and stirring.

As the child's skill increases, gradually withdraw your help. Let her do more and more by herself.

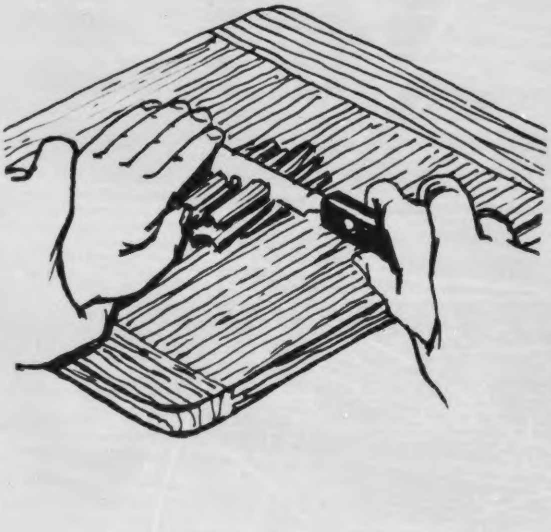
Teaching the Child to Prepare Foods (cont.)

4. Now the child is ready to learn to peel vegetables, fruit, and hard-boiled eggs. Put your hands over his and peel each item. Go through all the motions with him.

Try carrots, potatoes, eggs, oranges, bananas. Give him a variety of experiences. As he becomes more skillful, let him do more and more by himself.

5. Some foods need to be chopped. For example, celery, apples, nuts, and onions.

Place your hands over the child's hands. Hold the knife tip down with one hand, moving the blade up and down, and back and forth until the food is finely chopped.



Suggested Menus the Child Can Learn to Prepare

NO COOKING

Tuna Salad Sandwiches

Pudding, milk

Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwiches
Cheese Sandwiches
Jello, milk

Egg Salad
Carrots, celery,
Fruit, milk

Cottage cheese
Sliced fruit: oranges, bananas

SNACKS

Kool-Aid

Lemonade

Chocolate Milk (shake in container)

HOT PLATE

Macaroni and Cheese

Stewed Fruit

Soup

Mashed Potatoes

Spaghetti

TOASTER OVEN

Pizza on English Muffins

Cheese Melts

Cinnamon Toast

ELECTRIC FRYPAN

Scrambled Eggs
Bacon, Toast, Milk

Eggs in a Hole
(drop egg into hole in bread)

French Toast

Grilled Cheese Sandwiches

Pancakes

Hamburgers

OVEN

Cookies (use cookie mix and mix with fingers)

Pigs in a Blanket

Pizza

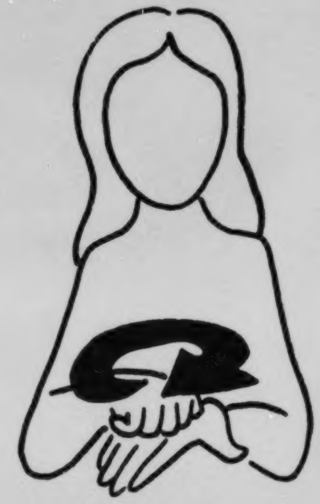
Shake and Bake Chicken

Sliced fruit sprinkled with cinnamon

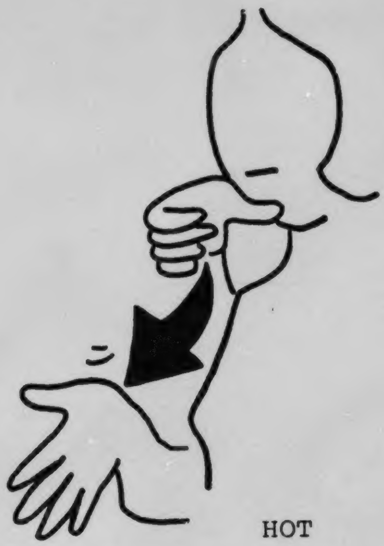
Teaching the Child to Wash Dishes

1. Say and sign WASH. Repeat the word as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

Say and sign HOT. Repeat the word as you take the child's hand and help him make the sign.



WASH



HOT

2. After the child has stacked her dishes on the counter, say and sign WASH. Repeat the word as you help her make the sign.

With your hands over hers, plug the sink and fill it with water. Turn the cold water on first to prevent burns.

Say and sign SOAP. Repeat the word as you help her make the sign. Add soap.

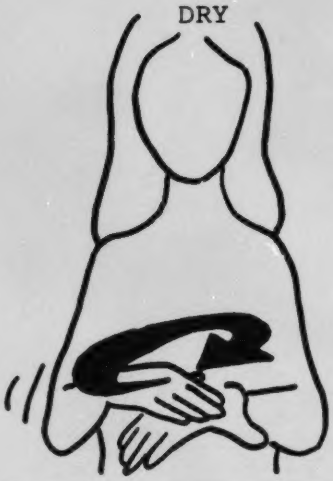
Go through all the motions of picking up the dishes, putting them in the water, washing them, rinsing them, and putting them in the drainer, with your hands over hers.

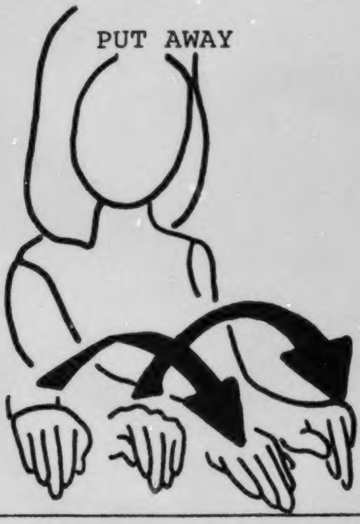
As she becomes more skillful, gradually withdraw your support. Let her do more and more by herself.

Teaching the Child to Put Dishes Away

1. Say and sign DRY. Repeat the word as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

Say and sign PUT AWAY. Repeat the words as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

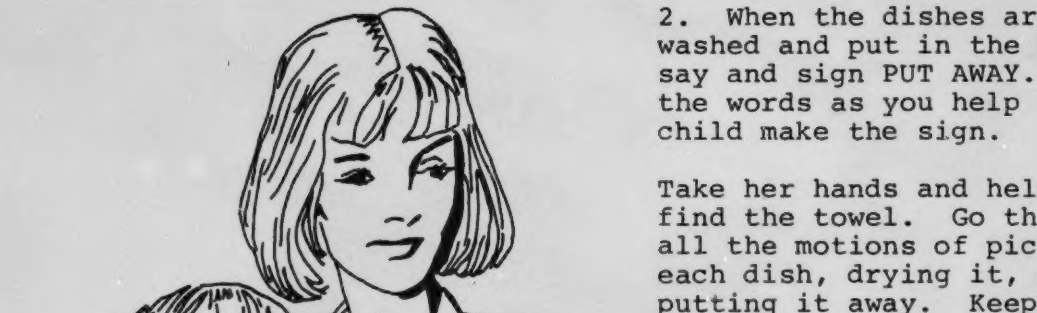




2. When the dishes are washed and put in the drainer, say and sign PUT AWAY. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

Take her hands and help her find the towel. Go through all the motions of picking up each dish, drying it, and putting it away. Keep the dishes in the same place and same order every day.

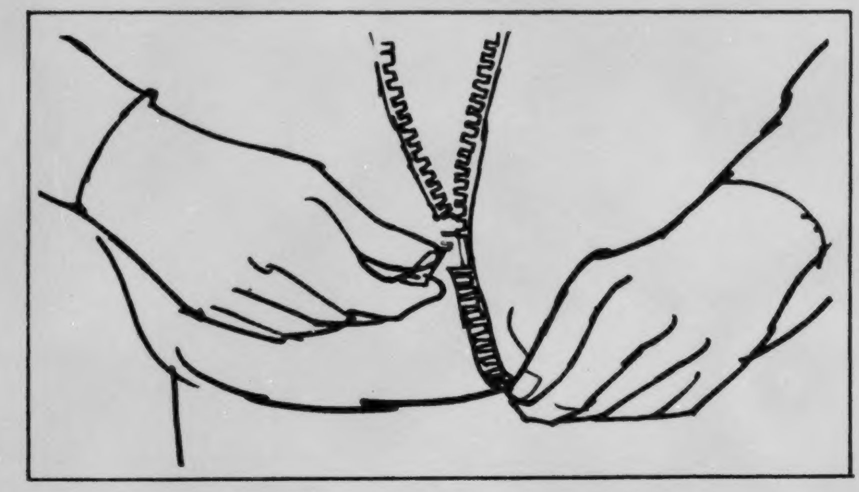
As the child's skill increases, let her do more by herself. If she needs your help, guide her by lightly placing your hand on her arm, or tapping her gently on the elbow.



INTRODUCTION TO DRESSING

A child should wear easy-to-manage clothing. Then it will be easier to help him learn to dress himself and to take his clothes off.

Zippers and elastic waistbands are easier to manage than buttons. Large buttons are easier for the child to handle than small ones.



If the child has trouble grasping small things, Velcro® could be used in place of buttons or zippers. Velcro® can be sewn in place quickly. It is washable and may make dressing and undressing easier for the child.

Stretchy neckbands on shirts that go over the head will make it easier to take them on and off. Clothes that are a size too big may be helpful when the child is first learning to dress and undress himself.

It takes time for a child to learn how to put on and take off each piece of clothing. It also takes time for him to learn front from back or inside from outside. Be patient. Don't rush him. Allow yourself time to help him. Give the child enough time to do it himself.

It doesn't matter at first if he puts his shirt on backwards or inside out. What does matter is that he is trying to do it himself. Let him try.

When you look good, you feel good. When you feel good, people sense that you like yourself. They will like you, too.

You want the child to look good and feel good. You want him to care how he looks.

You want him to choose clothing that looks good. After he has learned to dress himself, you want him to choose the clothes he needs. The child with no vision must rely on textures rather than color to select pieces of clothing.

It took time for all of us to learn these skills. It will take the child time to learn them, too.

You can help the child learn these skills by praising him frequently. Touch his shirt or sweater as you tell him how nice he looks. Take the time to let him know you care.

When you teach a child to dress, place your hands over his. Guide him through every action. Encourage the child to do more and more by himself. Praise him when he tries.

As he learns, gradually withdraw your help. Move your hands up to his wrists as you guide him. Then slowly move your hands further and further up his forearm as he gains in skill. If he hesitates, tap him gently on the elbow as a reminder.

Always call the child by name. Name each piece of clothing as you pick it up. Say "Put it on" or "Take it off," and make the sign. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

It is important to use language all the time. You want the child to understand what you want him to do. You want him to learn to tell you what he needs.

Dressing the Child

Every child should get dressed in the morning and undressed at night. Even if the child must stay in bed all day, his clothes should be changed.

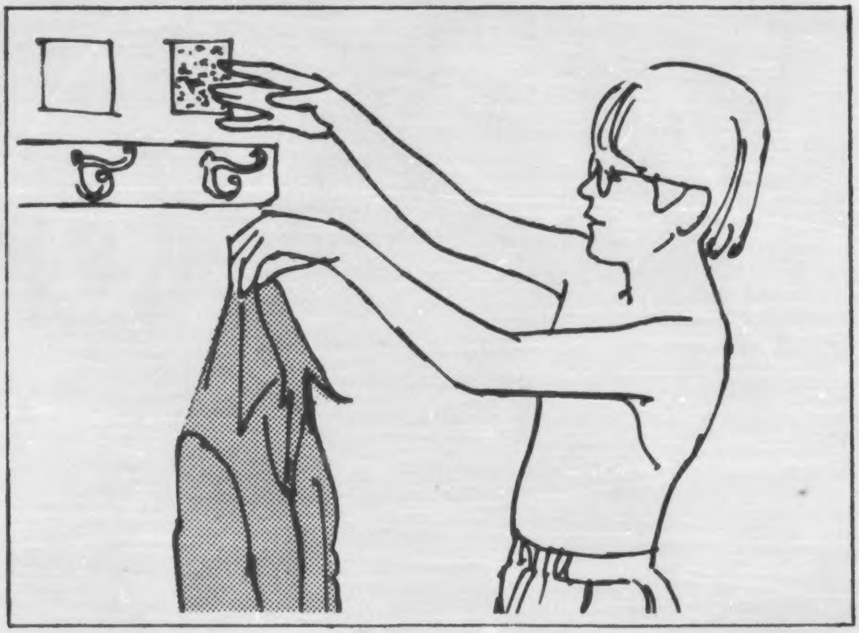
Have the child put on play clothes during the day. Have him put on different clothes for sleeping. Changing his clothes will help the child develop a sense of time. It will help him understand the daily routine. It will help him learn certain clothes go with certain activities. In bed or out, a child may learn to change his clothes.

The best way for a child to learn to button, zip, lace, and tie is to do these things on his own clothing. Sometimes extra practice with a dressing vest may help him learn these skills. These vests can be purchased, or a volunteer could make some for you.

The dressing vest allows the child to practice in the most natural way, and in the same body positions as with his own clothing.

Building Independence

A child is independent when he can dress himself and select his own clothing. He needs to know where to get clean clothes. He should know where to put his dirty clothes.

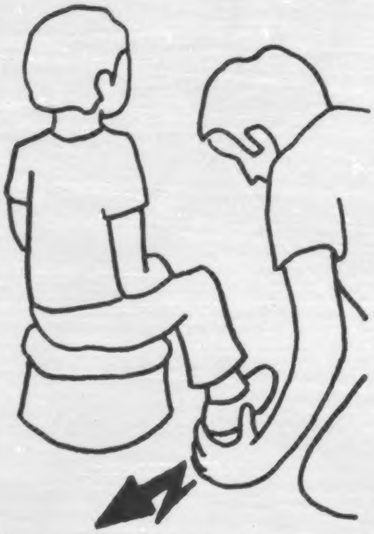


Have a special place for each child to put his clothes. Label these places by color or texture. This will make it easier for the child to get them and put them away. Hooks can also be labeled by color or texture so the child can find the right place to hang his own clothes. Hooks, drawers and hangers should be placed at the child's height whenever possible.

Teaching the Child to Pull Off His Shoes

1. Say and sign SHOE OFF. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

SHOE OFF



2. Say and sign OFF. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

Place your hands over his and help him untie his shoes. Then say and sign OFF again. Have him make the sign.

Be sure to allow time to do it himself. Praise him when he tries.

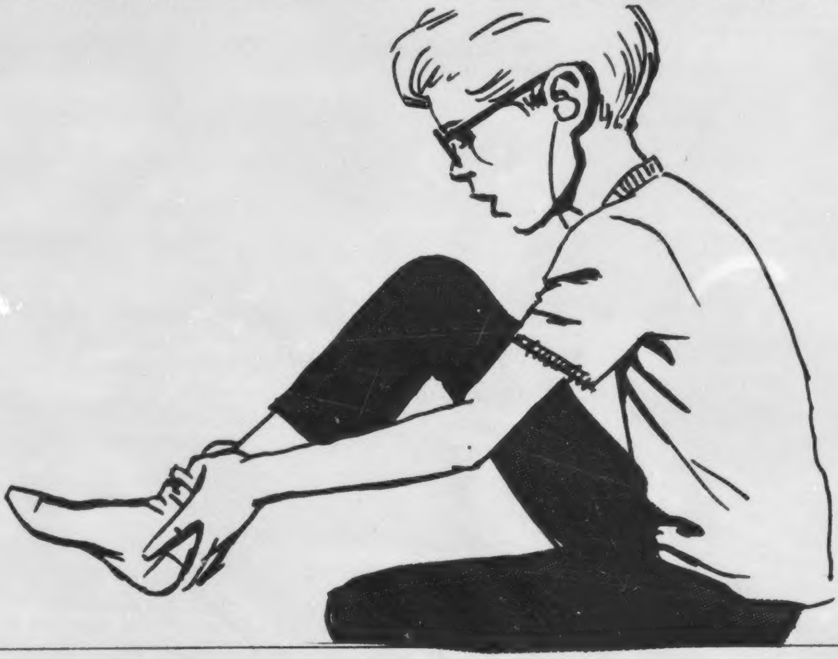
3. Say and sign OFF. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

Allow him time to respond. If he needs help, place his hands on the back of his shoes. Push the shoe forward.

Say and sign OFF again. If he hesitates, tap his elbow lightly as a reminder. Encourage him to keep trying. Praise him when he does.

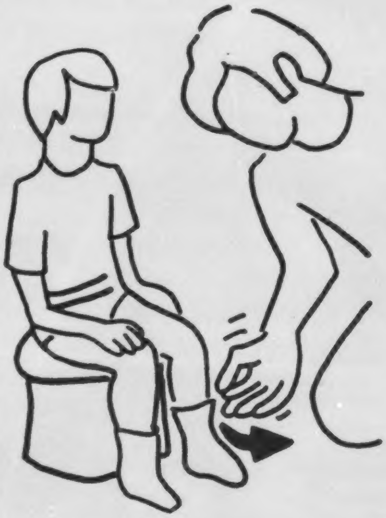
Teaching the Child to Pull Off His Socks

1. Say and sign SOCK OFF. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. With your hands over his, place your thumbs in the top of the sock and push down. Then grasp the toe and pull.

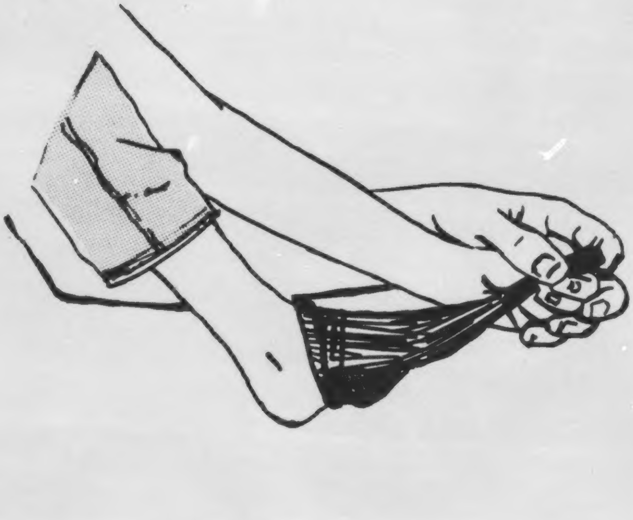


2. Say and sign SOCK OFF. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

SOCK OFF

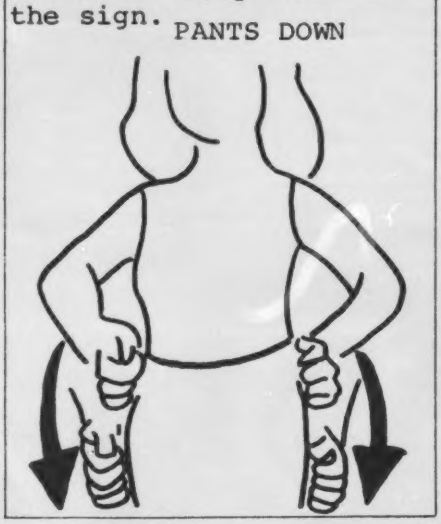


3. Gradually withdraw your help. Give the child a chance to do it by himself. Praise him when he tries.



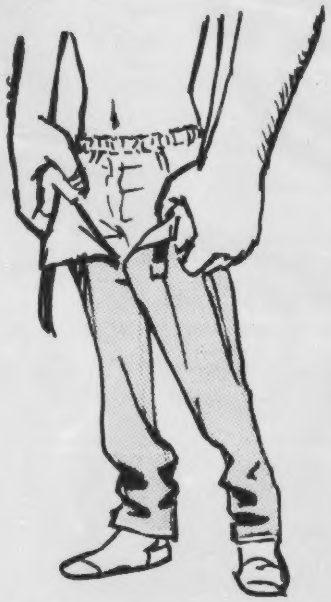
Teaching the Child to Pull Off His Pants

1. Say and sign PANTS DOWN. Repeat the words as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.



2. Use pants with an elastic waistband, or unfasten them for the child. Say and sign PANTS DOWN. Repeat the words as you help him make the sign.

Place your hands over his. Put your thumbs inside the waistband and push down as far as possible. Drop the pants and help him step out, one leg at a time.



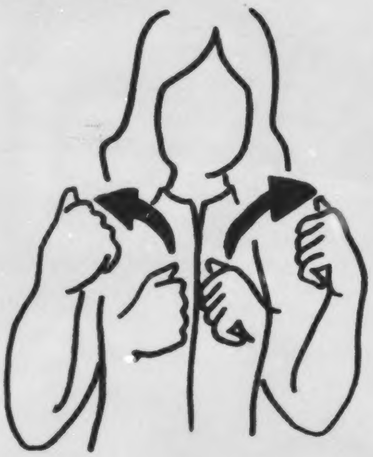
3. If the child has poor balance, help him sit down. With your hands over his, help him take off his shoes. Keep your hands over his and pull the pants off, one leg at a time. Be sure to say and sign OFF so he will know what you want him to do.

4. Gradually withdraw your help. Encourage him to push down by himself. If he needs help, push gently down on his hands. Allow him time to do it by himself. Praise him when he tries.

Teaching the Child to Take Off His Shirt

1. Say and sign SHIRT OFF. Repeat the words as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

SHIRT OFF



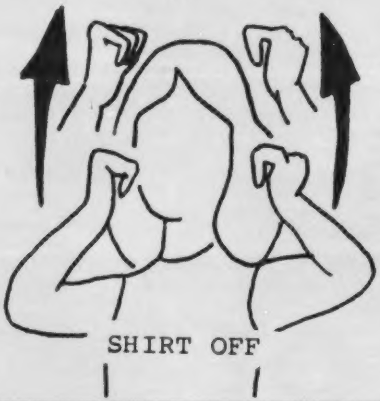
2. Say and sign SHIRT OFF. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. Unbutton or unzip his shirt or jacket. With your hands over his, open widely. Slip the coat or shirt partly off by tugging the sleeves down. Help him shrug or wiggle out.

3. Continue to unbutton or unzip the coat or shirt for the child, after signing SHIRT OFF. Then, let him open it by himself. Push it back at the shoulder and help him wiggle out. If he needs reminding, place your hands over his forearms and tug gently.

4. As the child's skill increases, withdraw your help. Allow him time to do it himself. If he needs help, tug at his sleeve to remind him.

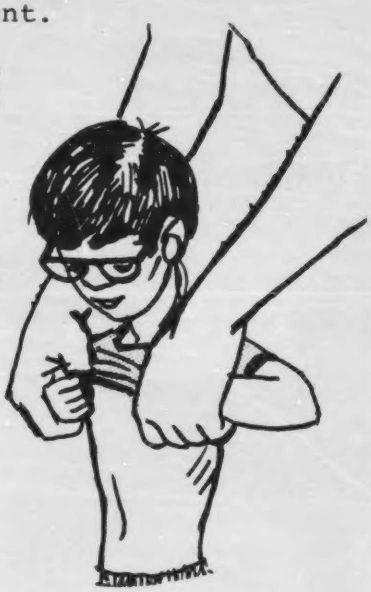
Teaching the Child to Pull His Clothes over His Head

1. Name the garment (T-shirt, sweater, sweatshirt, etc.). Say and sign OFF. Repeat the word as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

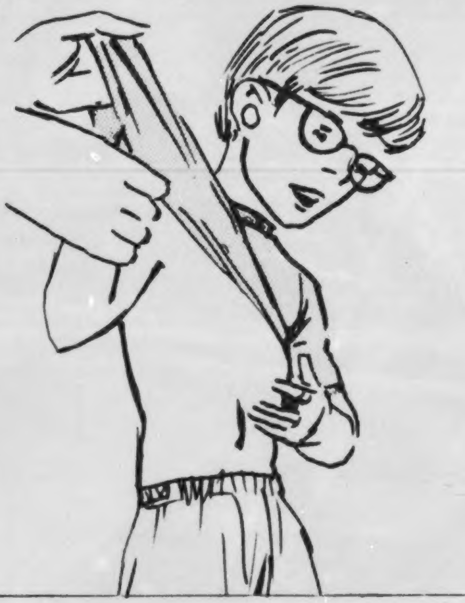


2. Name the garment. Say and sign OFF. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

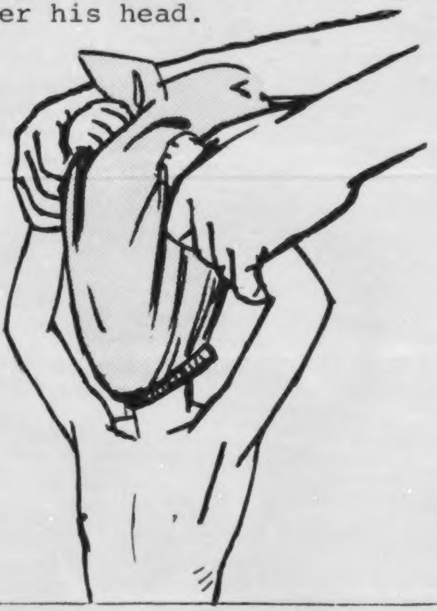
With your hands over his, hook your thumbs under the shirt and pull it up to the arm-hole.



3. Pull his arm down and slip it through the sleeve, one side at a time.



4. With your hands over his, help him pull the shirt up over his head.



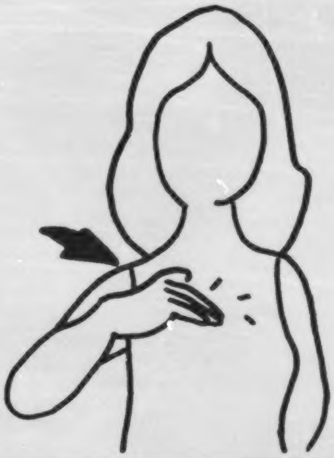
5. Gradually withdraw your help. Let the child do more and more by himself. Praise him when he tries.

Teaching the Child to Tell "Front" from "Back"

1. As you help the child dress, point out the front of his clothes. Point out the back. Gradually he will learn to put them on correctly.

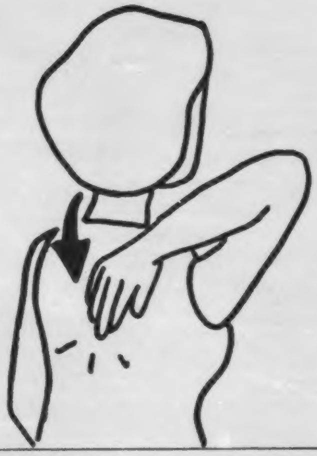
2. Say and sign FRONT. Repeat the word as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

FRONT



3. Say and sign BACK. Repeat the word as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

BACK

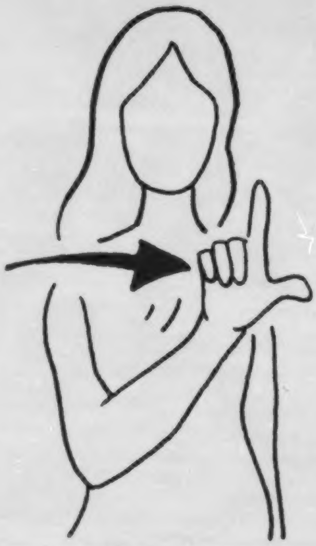


4. Labels, tabs, buttons and zippers will help the child tell back from front.

Helping the Child Learn "Left" and "Right"

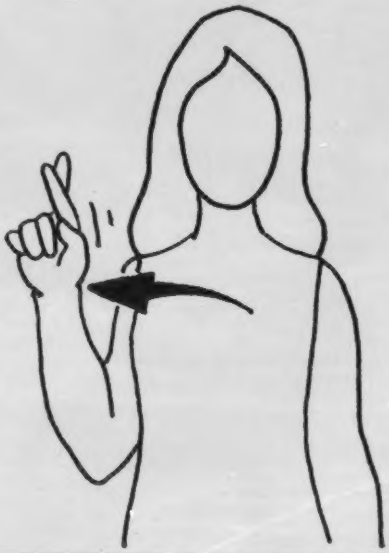
1. Say and sign LEFT. Repeat the word as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

LEFT



2. Say and sign RIGHT. Repeat the word as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

RIGHT

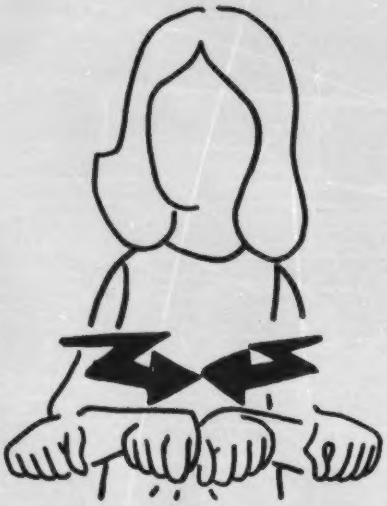


3. Label the left shoe to help the child get his shoe on the correct foot.

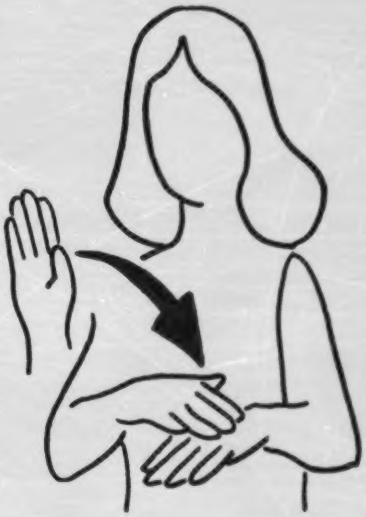
Teaching the Child to Put On His Shoes

1. Say and sign SHOE ON. Repeat the words as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

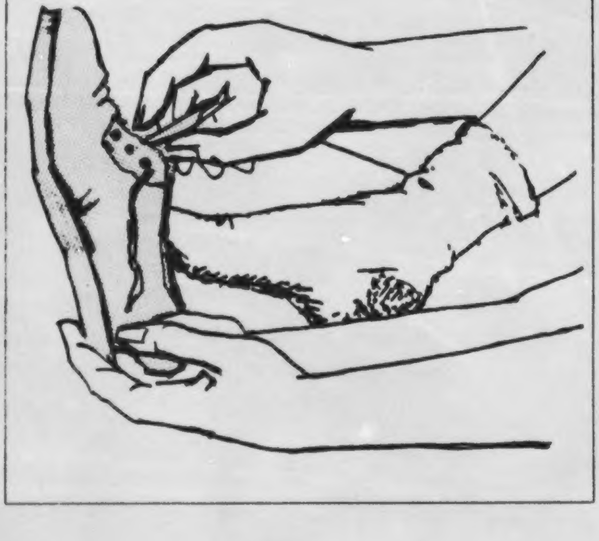
SHOE



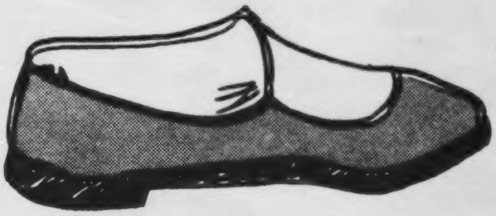
ON



2. Say and sign SHOE ON. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. With your hands over his, pull the tongue forward. Hold the tongue with one hand and slide the shoe on with the other.



3. If possible, let the child wear a slip-on type shoe. It will be easier for him to put on by himself. If the shoe fits tightly, cut the elastic bands on the inside. This will make it easier to put on.

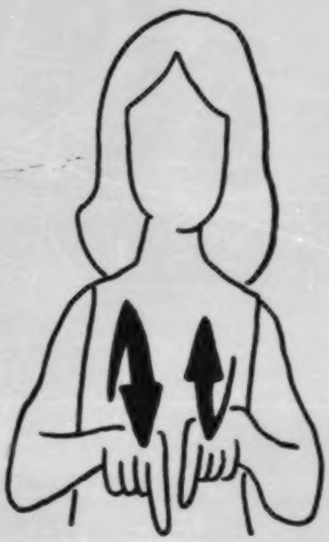


Teaching the Child to Put On His Socks

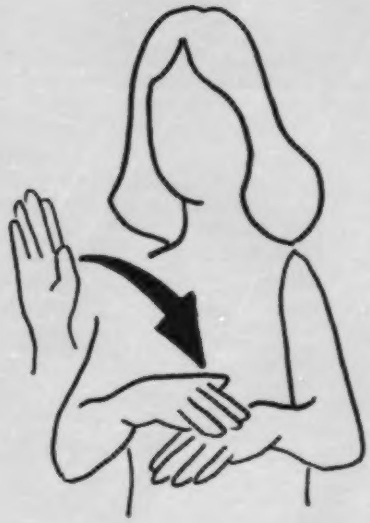
1. Use oversized socks so they will be easy to grasp and pull.

2. Say and sign SOCK ON. Repeat the words as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

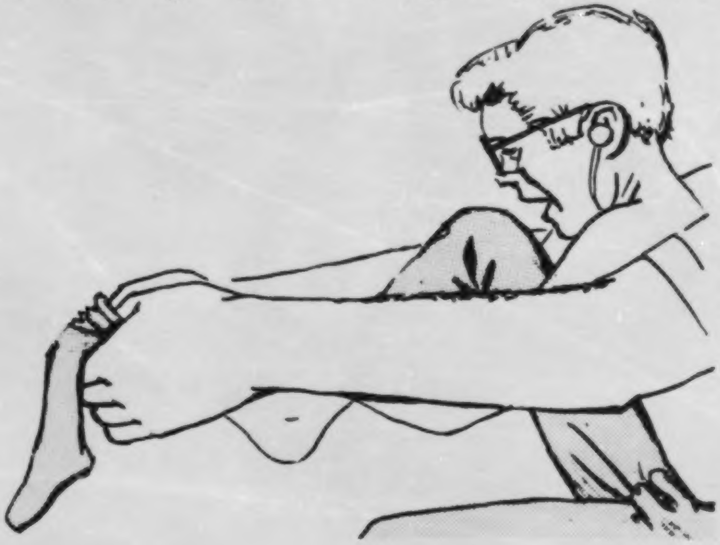
SOCK



ON



3. Say and sign SOCK ON. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. With your hands over his, grasp the top of the socks and gather them up. Place the opening over his toes and pull.

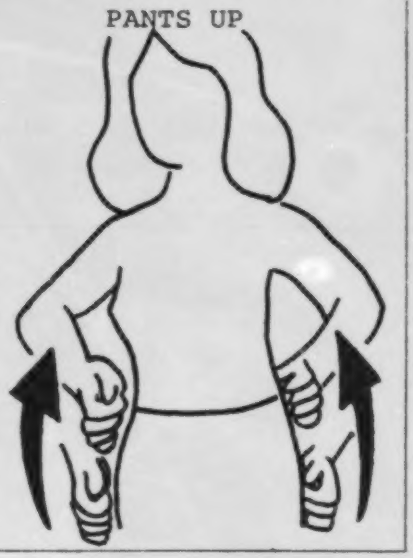


Give the child a chance to do it by himself. At first, the heel may be on wrong, but praise him for trying.

Teaching the Child to Pull Up His Pants

1. Loose pants with an elastic waistband are easiest to use.

2. Say and sign PANTS UP. Repeat the words as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.



3. Show the child his pants. Name them. Say and sign PANTS UP. Repeat the words and help the child make the sign. Seat the child on the floor. Help him put his legs into the pants, one at a time. When the pants are over his legs, help him stand up. Again, say and sign PANTS UP. Put his hands on the waistband and pull up.

4. If the child cannot stand or must remain in bed for other reasons, he can still learn to put on his pants. Show the child his pants. Name them. Say and sign PANTS UP. Repeat the words and help the child make the sign.

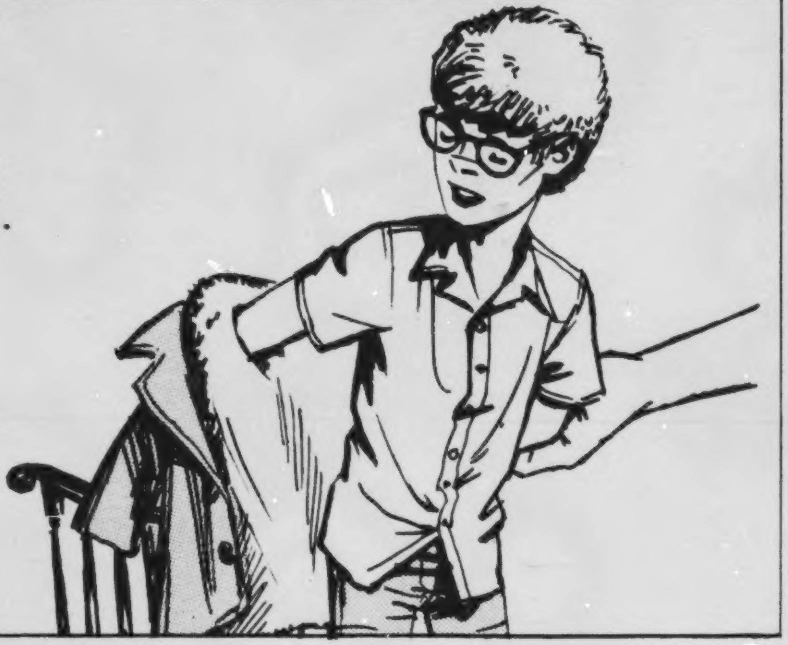
With your hands over his, help him put on his pants, one leg at a time. Laying flat on the bed, help him roll from side to side as he pulls his pants up.

Or, help the child bend his knees, place both feet flat on the bed and arch his back to lift his hips. Then help him pull up his pants.

Teaching the Child to Put On His Jacket or Shirt

1. Hang his jacket over the back of a chair, lining facing out.

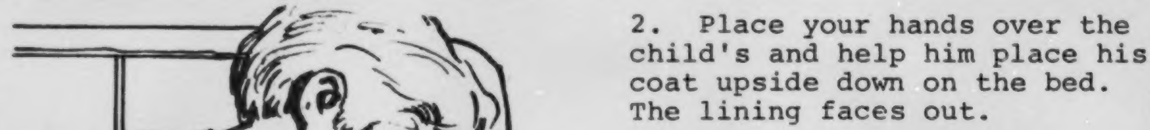
Have him stand with his back to the chair. Help him put his arms, one at a time, into the sleeves.



OR:

2. Place your hands over the child's and help him place his coat upside down on the bed. The lining faces out.

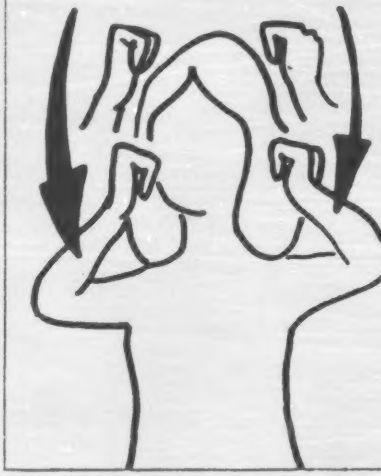
Have him slide his arms into the armholes and swing it over his head.



Teaching the Child to Pull a Shirt over His Head

1. Say and sign SHIRT ON. Repeat the words as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

SHIRT ON



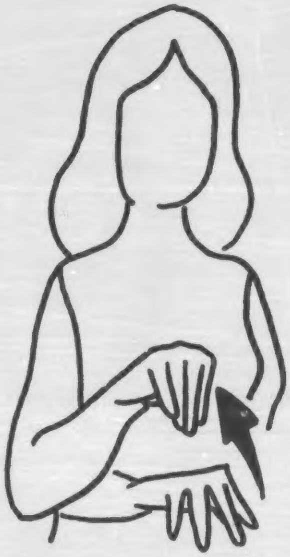
2. Say and sign SHIRT ON. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. With your hands over his, gather the shirt up and pull it down over his head.

3. With your hands over his, move his arms up through the sleeves, one at a time. Hold the shirt down with one hand while the other arm goes up through the sleeve.

Teaching the Child to Pick Up His Clothes

1. Say and sign PICK IT UP after he takes his clothes off. Repeat the words as you take the child's hands and help him sign PICK IT UP.

PICK IT UP

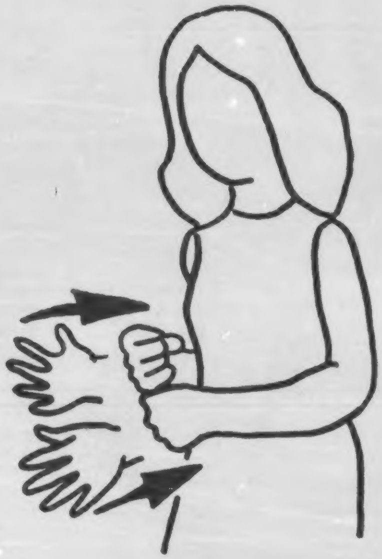


2. Have a hamper nearby. After his clothes are off, say and sign PICK IT UP. Have him make the sign. Then place your hands over his and help him find his clothes. With your hands still over his, pick them up and drop them into the hamper.

Teaching the Child to Select His Clothes

1. Say and sign GET YOUR CLOTHES. Repeat the words as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

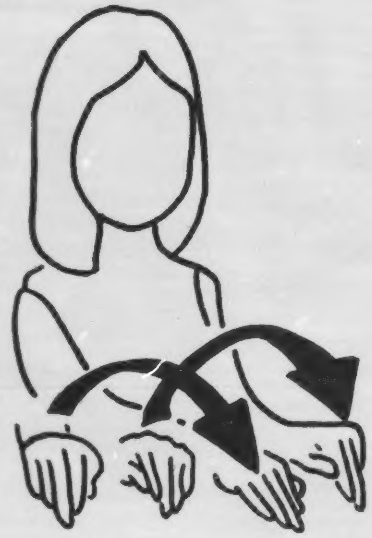
GET YOUR CLOTHES



2. Guide the child to the place his clothes are kept. Give him the sign for each piece of clothing. Help him make the sign. With your hands over his, select his clothes. Gradually withdraw your help. Encourage him to try it alone. Praise him when he does.

Teaching the Child to Put His Clothes Away

1. Say and sign PUT (AWAY). Repeat the word as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.



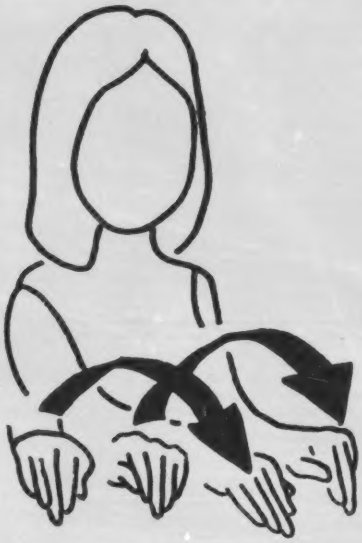
PUT (AWAY)

2. Label the child's drawer with braille, print or texture labels. You might also use paper cutouts or color coding. Give the sign for each piece of clothing. Then hand the clothing to the child. With your hand over his, help him put it away. Keep all his clothing in the same place and in the same order.

Teaching the Child to Put His Coat Away

1. Say and sign PUT (IT AWAY). Repeat the words as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

PUT (IT AWAY)

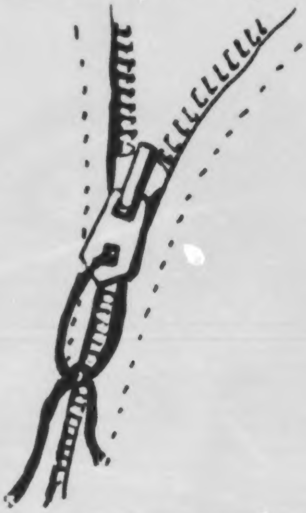


2. After he has taken off his sweater or coat, say and sign PUT IT AWAY. Help him make the sign. Put your hands over his and pick up the coat. If the child is unsteady on his feet, support him with one arm as he picks the coat up. Then hold the coat at the back, near the collar and help him place it where it belongs. Use texture or color coding for easy identification.

3. As the child becomes more skillful, slowly withdraw your help. Help him only if necessary. Give him time to do it himself. Praise him when he tries.

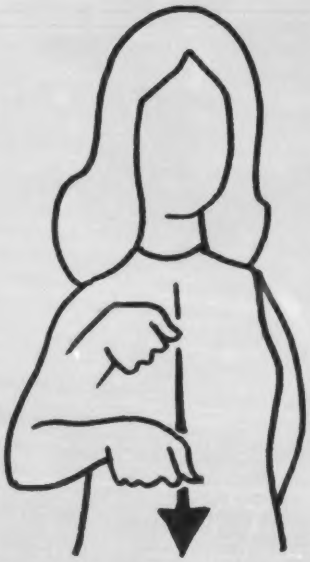
Teaching the Child to Unzip Jacket or Pants

1. Place tape or a yarn loop over the zipper tab to make it larger and easier to grasp.



2. Say and sign ZIPPER DOWN when you want the child to unzip his clothes. Repeat the words as you take his hands and help him make the sign.

ZIPPER DOWN



Make the sign at chest level for jacket and at waist level for pants.

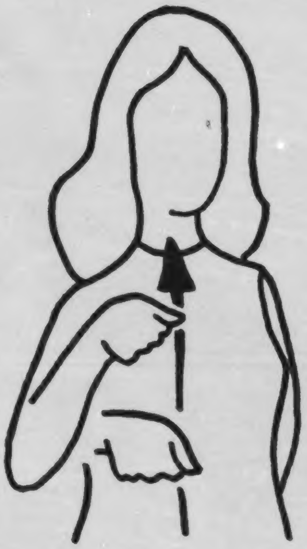
3. Say and sign ZIPPER DOWN. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

Take his hand in yours and grasp the zipper tab. Pull the zipper down.

As the child's skill increases, let him do it by himself. Tug on his hand if he needs a reminder.

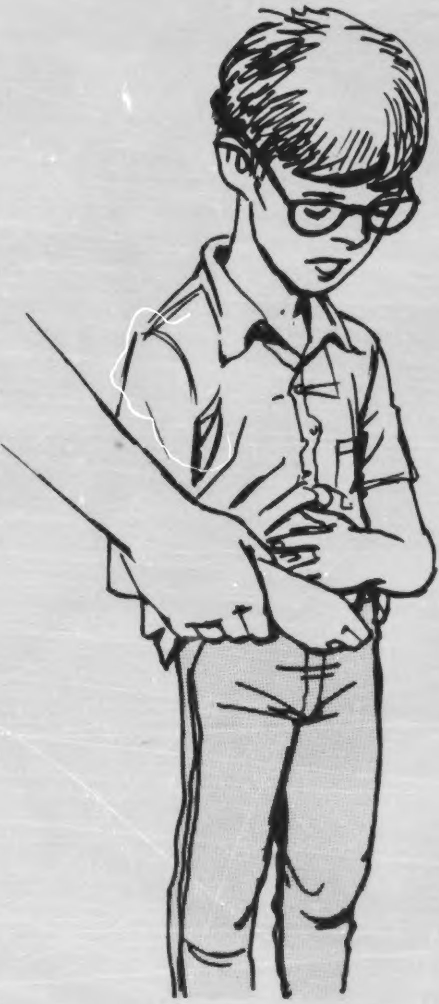
Teaching the Child to Zip Up Jacket or Pants

1. Say and sign ZIP UP. Repeat the words as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.



ZIP UP

Make the sign at chest level for jacket and at waist level for pants.

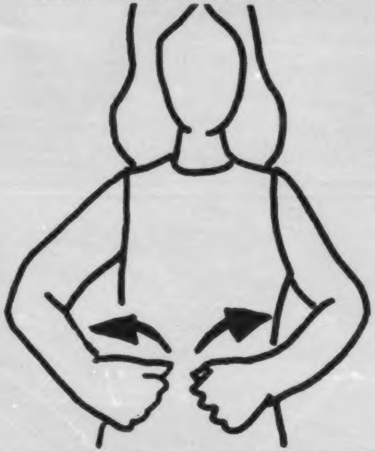


2. Say and sign ZIP UP. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Button the waistband. Place your hand over his and grasp the zipper tab. Pull it up. Allow time for him to do it by himself. If he does not respond, move his hand upward as a reminder.

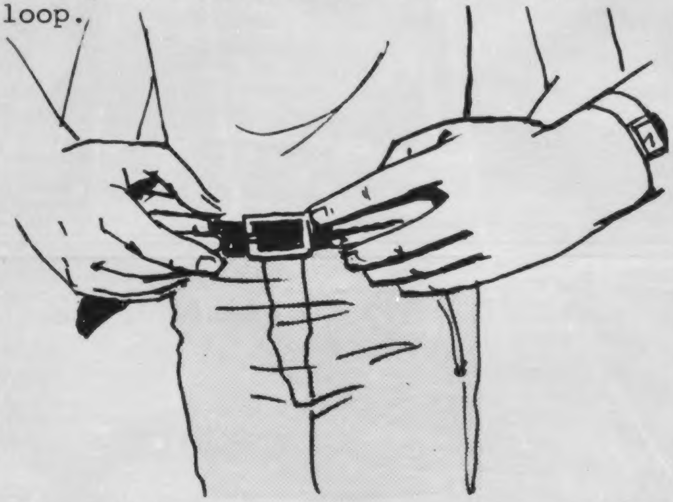
Teaching the Child to Unbuckle a Belt

1. Say and sign UNBUCKLE YOUR BELT. Repeat the words as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

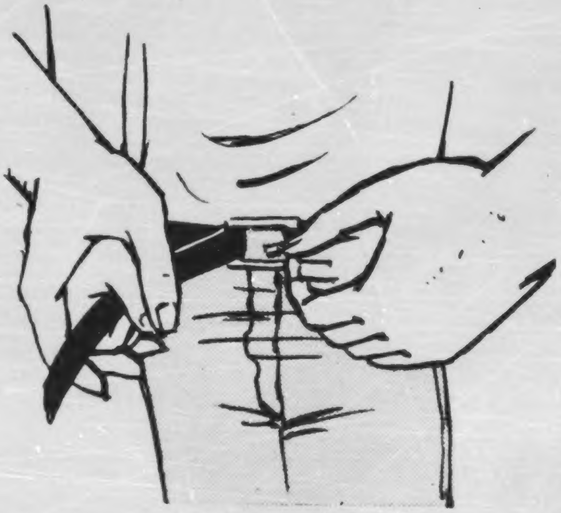
UNBUCKLE YOUR BELT



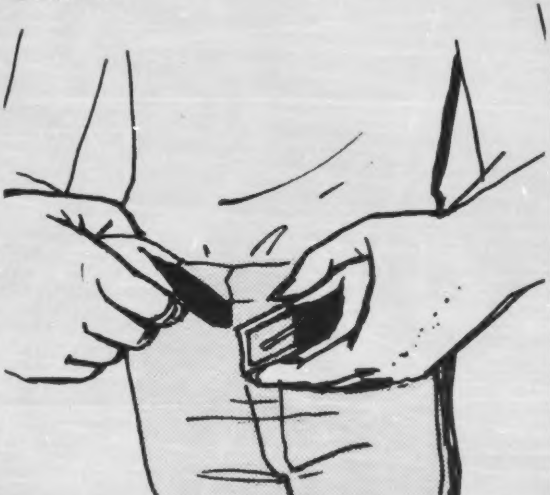
2. Say and sign UNBUCKLE YOUR BELT. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. With your hands over his, pull the belt out of the belt loop.



3. With your hands still over his, hold the belt with one hand, and release the buckle with the other.



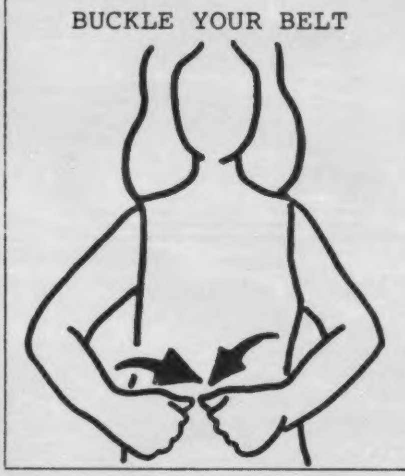
4. Keep your hands over his as you slide the belt out of the buckle



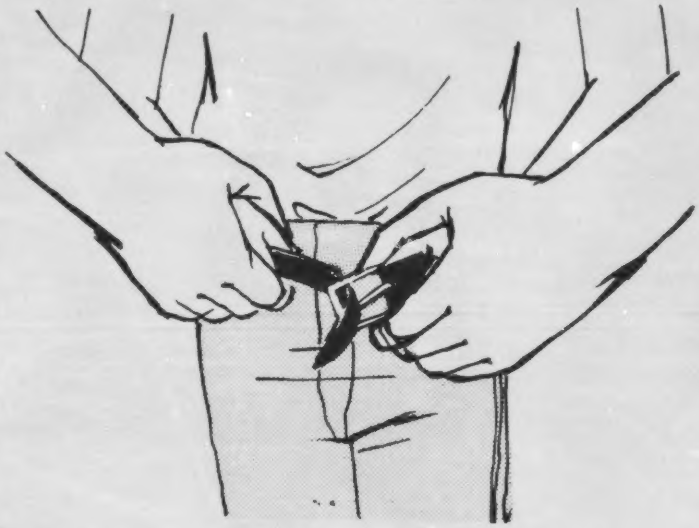
5. Gradually withdraw your help as the child becomes more skillful. Hold his forearms to guide him as he becomes more confident, or tap him lightly on the elbow as a reminder.

Teaching the Child to Buckle a Belt

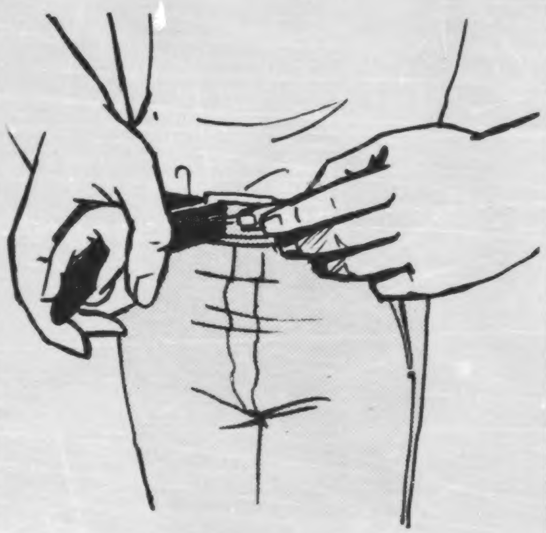
1. Say and sign BUCKLE YOUR BELT. Repeat the words as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.



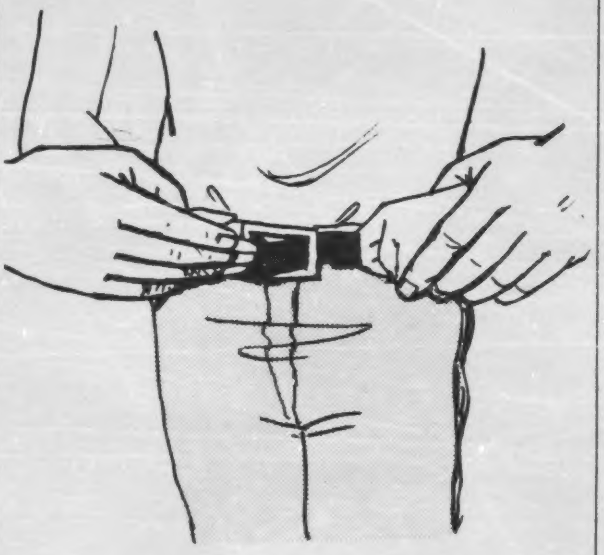
2. With your hands over his, slide the belt through the buckle.



3. Keep your hands over his and help him pull the belt back with one hand and insert the buckle prong into the belt.



4. Help him as he threads the belt into his belt loop.

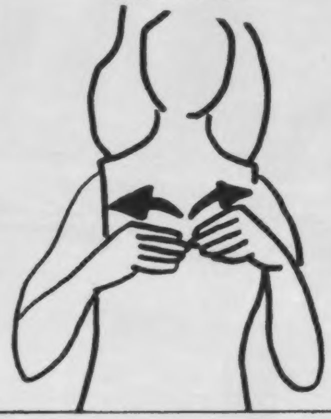


5. Gradually withdraw your help. Allow the child time to do this by himself. Praise him when he tries.

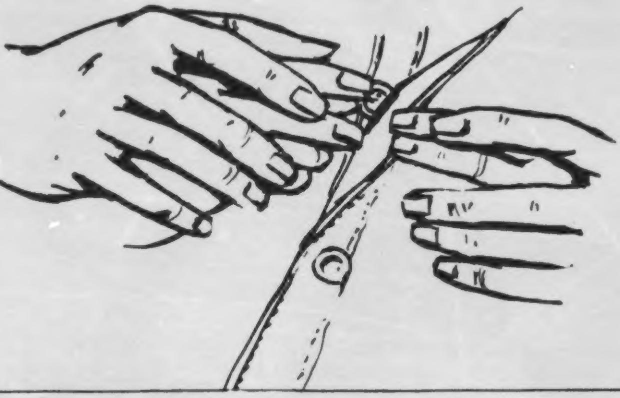
Teaching the Child to Unbutton Clothes

1. Say and sign UNBUTTON. Repeat the word as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

UNBUTTON

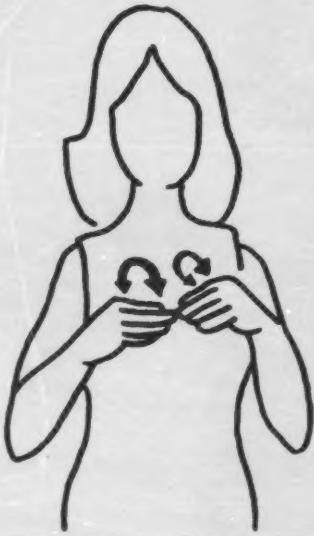


2. Say and sign UNBUTTON. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. With your hands together, place your fingers over his and push the button through the buttonhole. Pull the shirt open. Large buttons make it easier to learn.

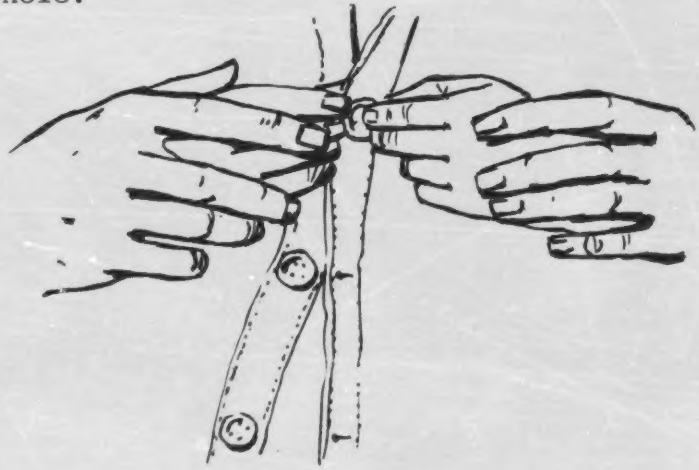


1. Say and sign BUTTON. Repeat the word as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.

BUTTON



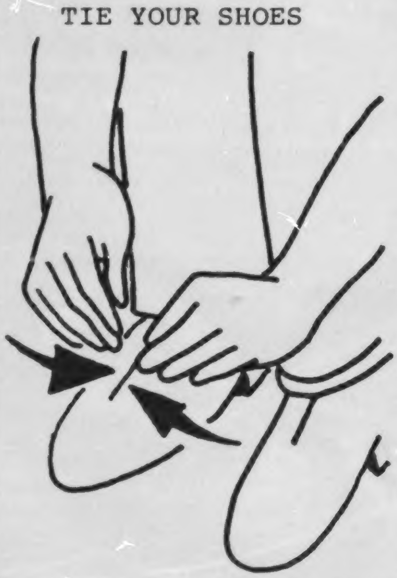
2. Say and sign BUTTON. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. With your hands over his, overlap the shirt front. Place your fingers on his and push the button through the hole.



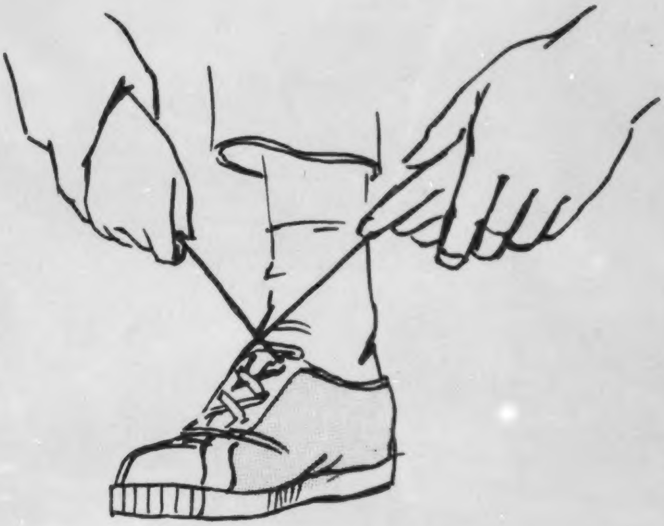
Encourage him to try alone. At first, the buttons may not be in the right hole, but praise him for trying.

Teaching the Child to Tie a Shoe

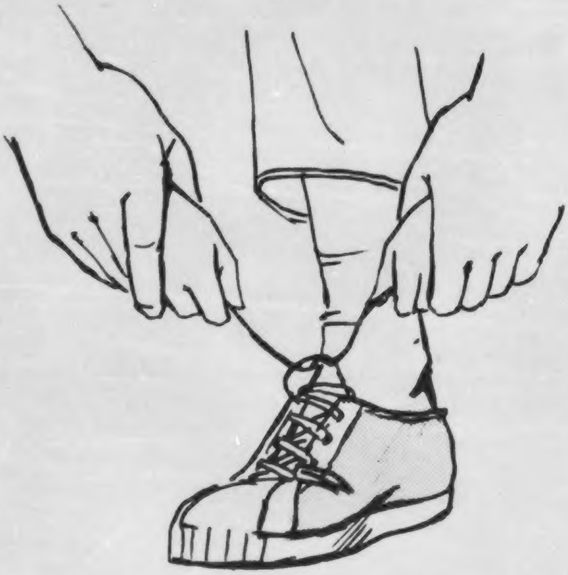
1. Say and sign TIE YOUR SHOES. Repeat the words as you take the child's hands and help him make the sign.



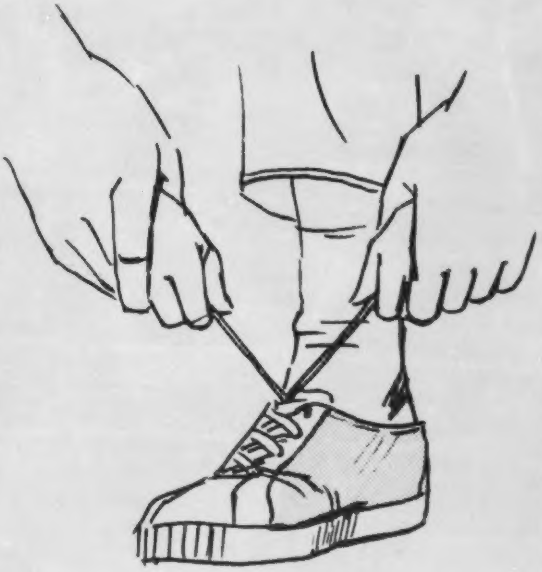
2. With your hands over his, cross the shoestrings, one over the other.



3. Keeping your hands over his, loop one string under the other.

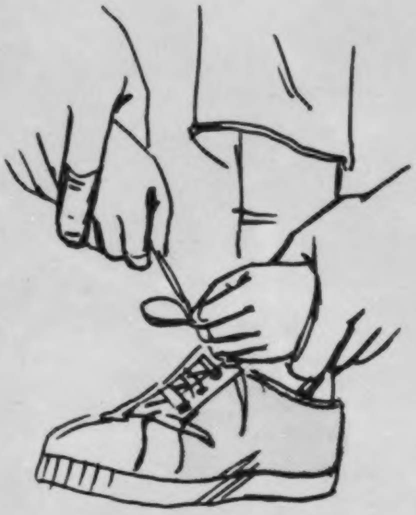


4. Grasp the string and pull tight.

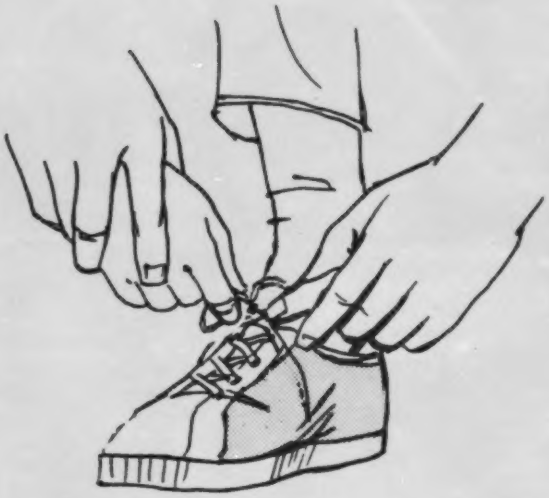


Teaching the Child to Tie a Shoe (cont.)

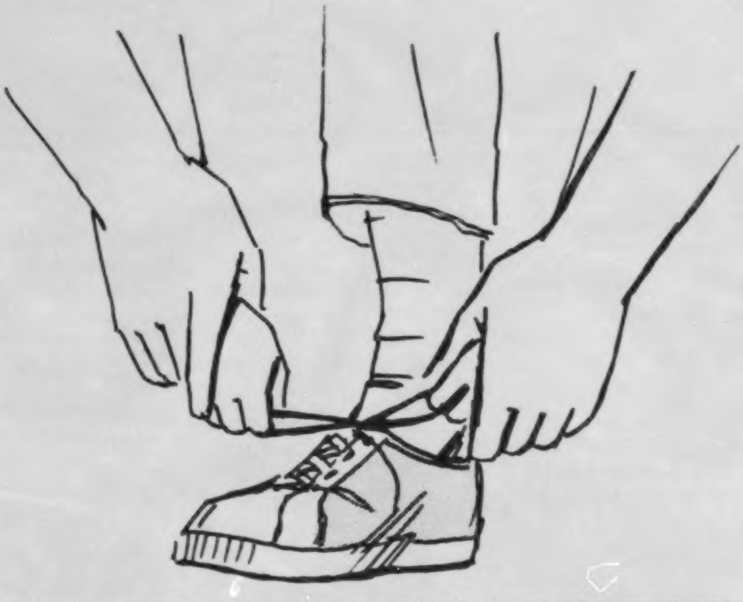
5. Make a loop on one side.



6. Make a loop on the other side.



7. Tie the two loops together.



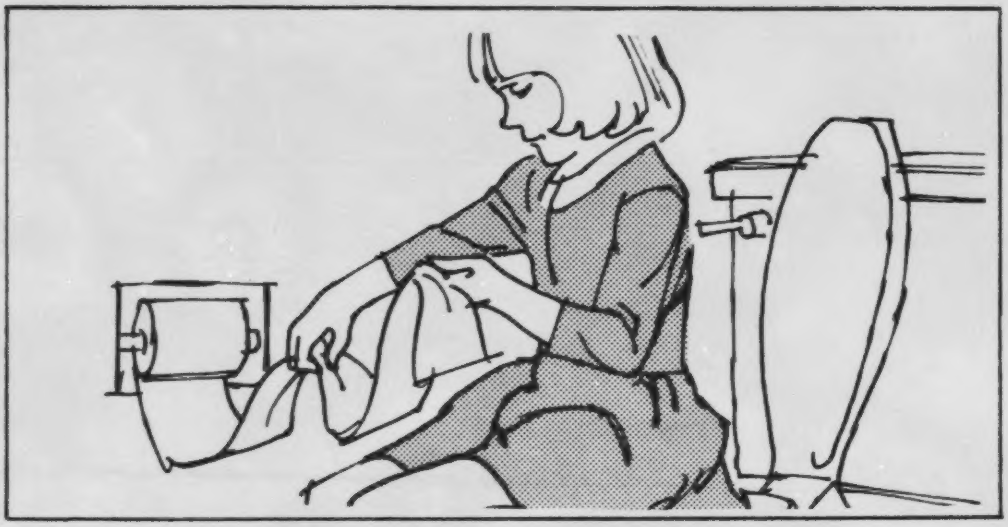
8. Allow the child time to do it by himself. Praise him when he tries. Learning to tie shoes is the most difficult job in dressing. It will take a long time for most children.

INTRODUCTION TO TOILET TRAINING

Training a child to use a potty or toilet is a long-term process. It takes time and effort. One day a child will be successful - no accidents! The next day he may wet his pants. Don't be discouraged. It takes time to learn good toilet habits. Be patient. Take one step at a time.

Help the child learn to stay dry until he is taken to the bathroom. You want him to go when you remind him.

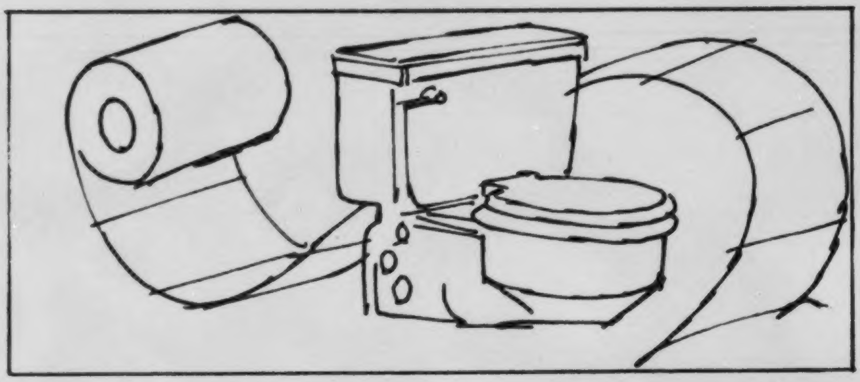
You want him to take care of himself in the bathroom. You want him to be able to make his needs known and to go alone. Your final goal is to have the child take care of all his toilet needs.



No one wants to hold someone, or even be around someone, who is soiled, wet, or smells bad. It is not pleasant changing diapers, especially on older children.

We feel better about being near children when they are toilet trained.

Your goal is to help each child be as independent as possible. You want him to feel in control of his own body. Control of body habits can also lead to more independence in other areas.



When the child becomes toilet trained, it increases his feeling of being capable and independent. It also encourages you. You will feel that he has accomplished something important. He has! And you have accomplished something worthwhile, too.

Taking the First Step

The first step in toilet training a child is to remove his diapers. Put him in training pants. Diapers may still be used at night if necessary, but not during the day. Do not use rubber pants. You want the child to know when he is wet and when he is dry. You want him to be uncomfortable with wet pants.

Help him feel his pants. If they are wet, say or sign WET. Take him to the bathroom immediately. You want him to learn that wet pants belong in the bathroom.

Have him help you change his pants. He may not like the feel of the wet pants. Have him help you anyway. But don't be angry. Do not act disgusted. Let him know that while you do not like wet pants, you do like him.

When the child has on dry pants, help him feel his pants. Say and sign DRY. Praise him. Let him know that you like dry pants. Let him know you like him, too, whether he's wet or dry.

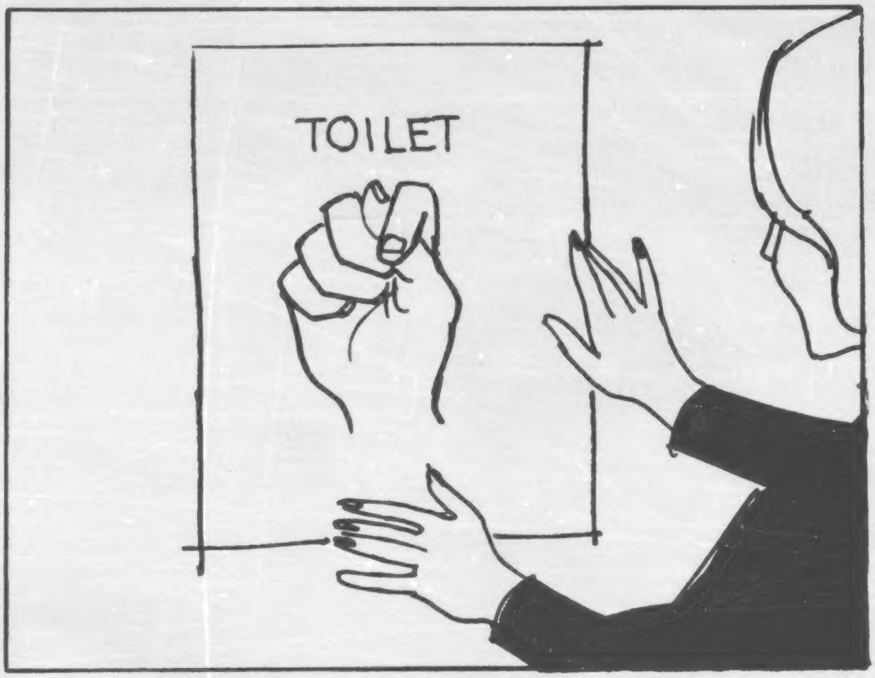
Communicating Toilet Needs

When it is time to use the bathroom, call the child by name. Use his name sign. Then, say TOILET and make the sign. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

Be sure to always use both signs and words when the child is taken to the bathroom or when he is wet.

Gradually, the child will begin to recognize the sign.

The same word and the same sign should be used by everyone. Using a different word or sign for TOILET will confuse the child. It may help to put a poster up in the bathroom with the sign to be used.



There are many different methods used to toilet train children. Which one you choose is up to you. Your goal is to toilet train the child. This means you must find the method which will be successful with him.

Fixing a Schedule

Most residential facilities have a fixed schedule for toileting the children. This is usually in the

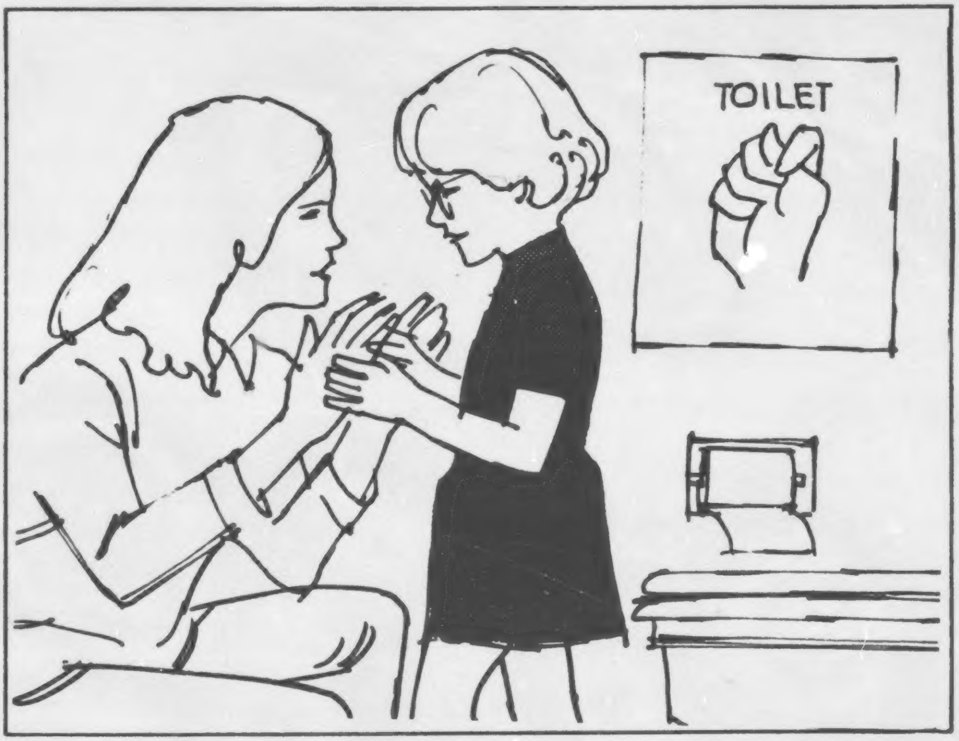
morning when they awaken, after meals, and before bed. If the child cannot learn with this schedule, you may want to try a more individual schedule. See the first page in the following activity section.

If scheduling does not work, you may want to try having the child drink water frequently. Then take him to the bathroom every few minutes, trying to catch him before he wets his pants. Each time his pants are dry, praise him. He may get the idea. He may learn he should use the toilet.

Using Praise

Whatever method you use, praise the child. Praise him for sitting on the toilet. He is cooperating and this is good. Let him know it. Make toilet training a pleasant experience. When he does succeed, praise him even more. Make the child feel proud. He has accomplished something. Let him know how pleased you are.

Be sure to use praise all the time. If you give him a reward such as food or toys, also praise him when you do it. Gradually, rewards can and should be withdrawn. You want the child to be pleased with your words and your personal approval. You want him to be pleased with his own success.



If the child has an accident or soils himself, don't scold. Don't panic. Say and sign WET and have him feel his wet or dirty pants. Take him to the bathroom and have him help you change them.

Don't be angry, but don't allow refusal. The bathroom is the place to use, and you must insist that he use it. He should help you remove his wet pants. Say and sign TOILET, and place him on the seat.

Whether the child uses the toilet or not, praise him. Put on dry pants and help him feel them. Praise him again. Reward is more successful than punishment.

There is no way you can force the child to use the toilet. Learning is a matter of time and effort. Be persistent. Relax and try again. If you are tense, he may become tense, too. Then he will not be able to eliminate, and training will be more difficult.

Using the Same Routine

Children like to do things in the same way. Repetition helps them know what to expect. Repetition helps them learn. Always use the same routine, the same word, and the same sign when toileting the child. It helps him understand what is happening. This understanding develops his feelings of security and trust.

Making Him Comfortable

The toilet height should fit the size of the child. If the child is too small to use a regular toilet, you

may want to use a low potty chair. Or, a low box can be placed in front of the toilet to support his feet. If the child's feet dangle, he may not be able to relax. He may even be frightened.

Flushing the Toilet

Do not flush the toilet while the child is sitting on it. The sound or the vibrations of the flushing toilet may frighten him. When the child is finished,

have him stand beside you and help him flush the toilet. Be reassuring if he is at all frightened.

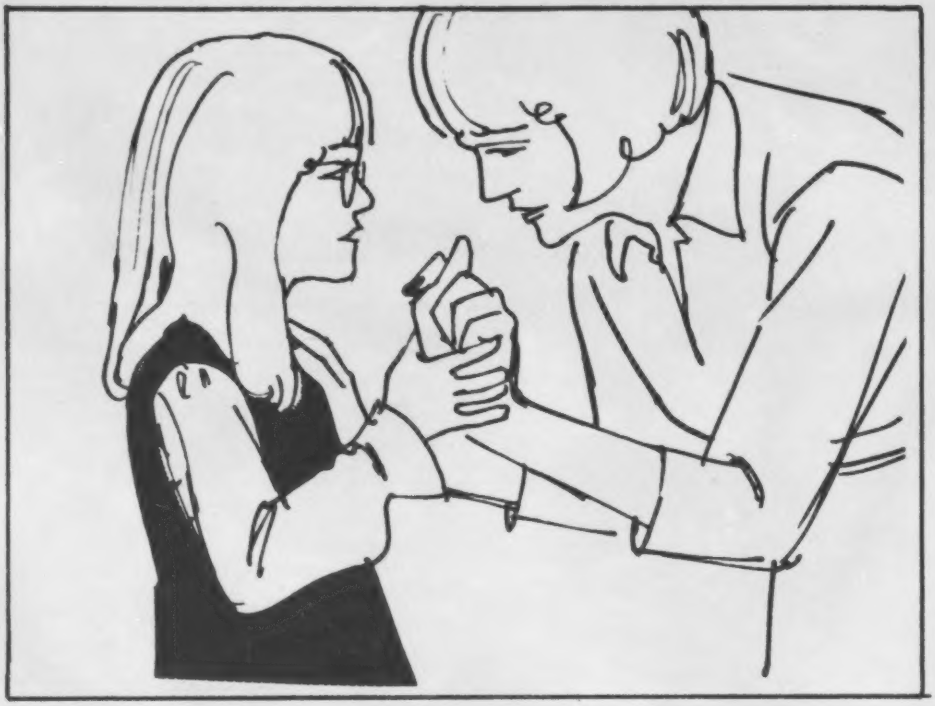
Children may at times resent being left alone in the bathroom. If the child is angry or afraid at being left on the toilet alone, stay with him. Little by little move farther away. Gradually he will come to accept being there by himself. Never leave him on the toilet for more than ten minutes.

Using Easy-to-Manage Clothing

Keep the child out of diapers during the daytime. Use training pants. He will be able to pull these up and down easily.

His outer clothing, especially his pants, should also be easy to pull up and down. Pants with elastic waistbands are ideal. They can be pulled down quickly and easily. It may be useful if the child's pants are even one size too large. Tight clothing is difficult to remove.

You may want to start with one child at a time. Start with the child you feel will be most successful. As he learns, your confidence and enthusiasm will grow.



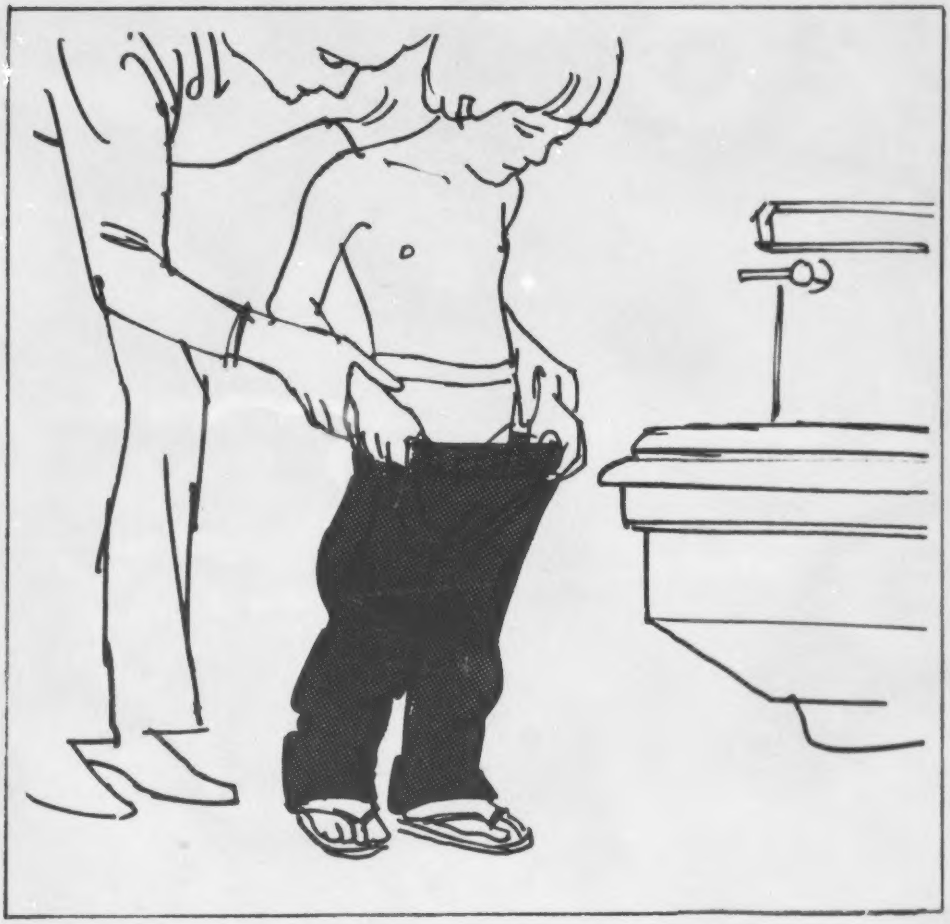
You will feel better about working with the other children you care for.

Start by saying and signing the child's name. Then say and sign TOILET. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Then, start the child walking towards the toilet.

Encourage him to walk to the bathroom on his own. If he forgets where he is going, take his hand and make the sign again. If you need to, tap him gently on the shoulder to get him started again. The child will begin to think about where he is going.

When you reach the bathroom, you are ready to begin to help him undress and use the toilet. Keep your hands over the child's as you go through the entire action.

When you feel him trying to pull his pants down by himself, release your hands immediately to let him finish. If he stops or hesitates, tighten your grip. Continue to guide him. You want the child to do as much as he can for himself.



Every child will need more help in the beginning. Later, he will learn to carry out more and more of the action by himself. Let him learn to be independent. Don't guide him if he makes an attempt to help himself. Give him time to do it on his own.

Independence develops through learning one skill at a time. Don't be impatient. Whenever a child tries to do something by himself, praise him. Make him feel good about it. Continue to help him when he needs it, but encourage him to do more and more alone.

Using the Buddy System

When a child is secure in his toilet habits, he can take care of his own needs. He may then be able to help another child who is just learning.

Using a Urinal

After being toilet trained, all boys need to know how to use urinals. But first he must stay dry until he is sent to the bathroom. He must also be able to use the toilet. When he can do these things, you can begin teaching him to use a urinal.

A boy can be taken to the bathroom with a buddy, a volunteer, or a male co-worker. If the boy has some usable vision, he may be able to learn by watching and imitating. If not, you will have to guide him through the action.

Determining the Child's Schedule

Mark down the times the child urinates or has a bowel movement each day. Use "U" for urinate, "BM" for bowel movement. After keeping this chart for several weeks, you may see a definite pattern in the times the child eliminates.

	A.M.												P.M.													
	6:00	6:30	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30	12:00	12:30	1:00	1:30	2:00	2:30	3:00	3:30	4:00	4:30	5:00	5:30	6:00	6:30
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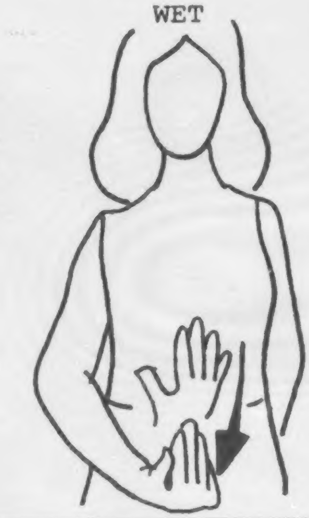
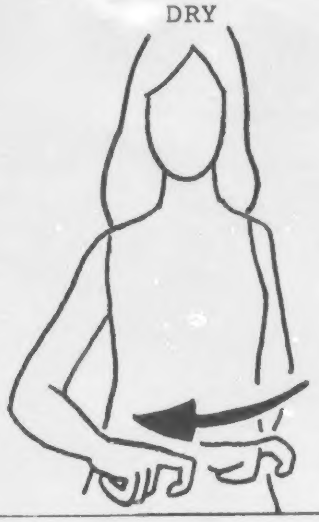
Teaching the Child "Wet" and "Dry"

1. Say and sign WET. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.



2. Say and sign DRY. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.



3. Take the child to the bathroom at scheduled times. Help him feel his pants. If his pants are wet, say and sign WET. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. Have him sit on the toilet for a few minutes.

4. Take the child to the bathroom at scheduled times. Help him feel his pants. If his pants are dry, say and sign DRY. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. Praise him. Then have him sit on the toilet for a few minutes.

Using the Bathroom at Scheduled Times

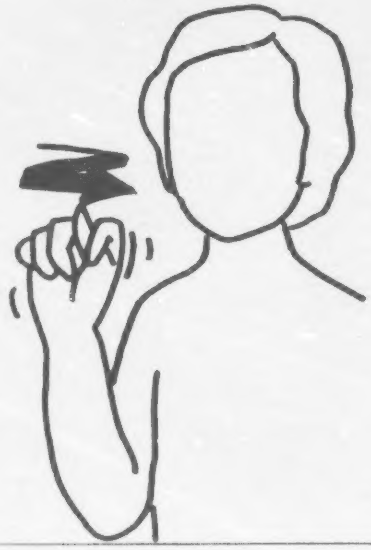
1. Take the child to the toilet at the times he usually has an "accident." Say and sign TOILET. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign.

Start him walking toward the bathroom. If he forgets where he is going, remind him by helping him make the sign again. Walk beside him.

If he happens to urinate or have a bowel movement when sitting on the toilet, praise him. If he doesn't, don't be upset. Just take him off the toilet and try again another time.

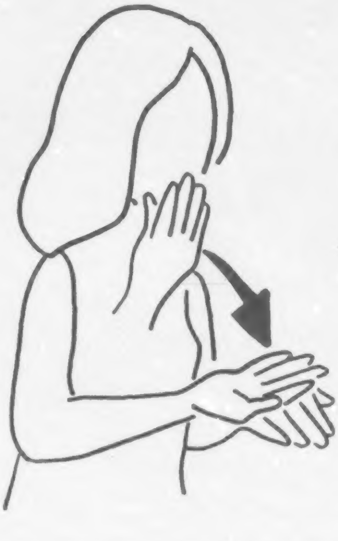
2. Say and sign TOILET. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

TOILET



3. Praise him when he succeeds. Say and sign GOOD. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

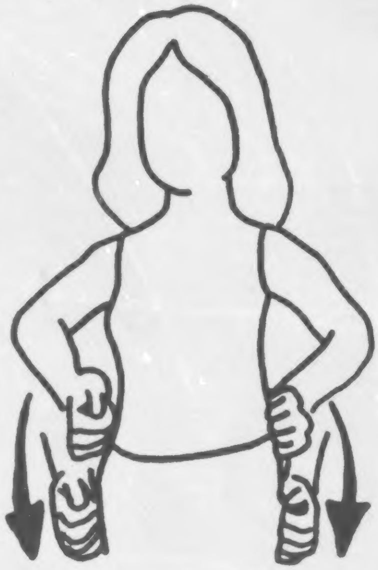
GOOD



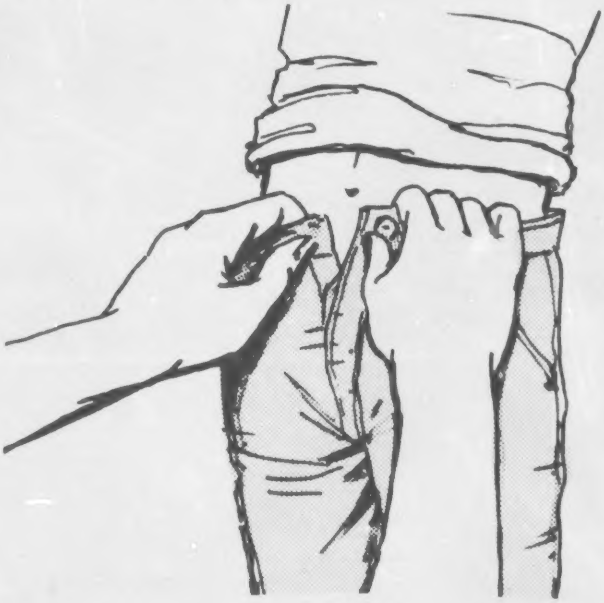
Teaching the Child to Pull Down His Pants

1. Say and sign PANTS DOWN. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

PANTS DOWN

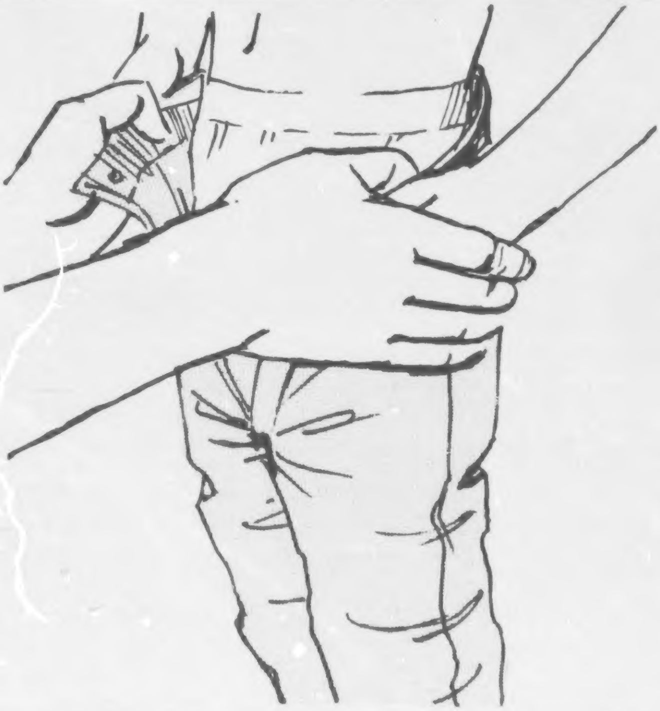


2. Keep the child in training pants during the day. If the child is wearing trousers with snaps or buttons, unfasten them for the child.



3. Say and sign PANTS DOWN. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. Place your hands over his. Put your thumbs inside the waistband and push down as far as you can reach.

As the child's skill increases, let him push his pants down by himself. If he needs a reminder, have him make the sign again. Tug his waistband gently. Praise him when he tries.



Teaching the Child to Take Off His Pants

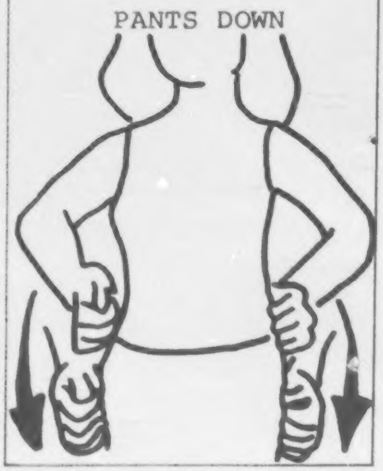
1. If the child has wet himself, take him into the bathroom to change him.

Say and sign PANTS DOWN. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. Place your hands over his. Put your thumbs inside the waistband and push down as far as you can reach.

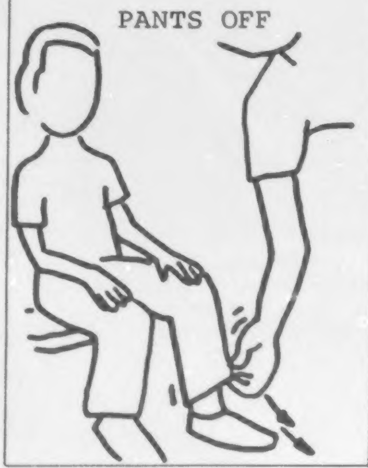
After pushing the pants down, help the child step out of them. If he has poor balance, let him sit on the floor. Say and sign PANTS OFF. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. With your hands over his, pull the pants legs off, one leg at a time.

If his shoes make it difficult, help him take them off. Say and sign SHOE OFF. Repeat the words as you help him make the sign. Place your hands over his and help him remove the shoes.

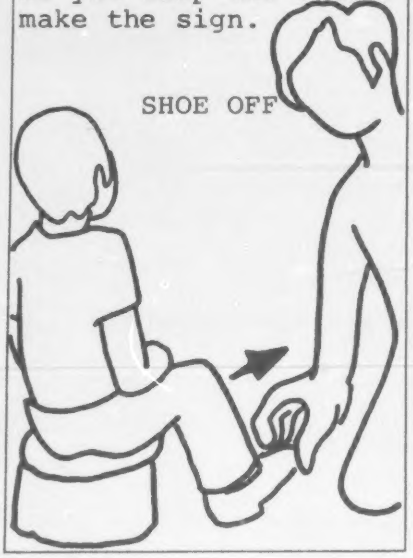
2. Say and sign PANTS DOWN. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.



3. Say and sign PANTS OFF. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.



4. Say and sign SHOE OFF. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

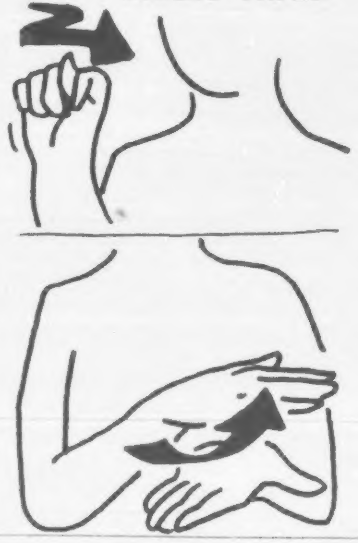


Teaching the Child to Use Toilet Paper

1. Say and sign TOILET PAPER. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. Place your hand over hers and take a piece of paper from the dispenser or roll. With your hand over hers, hold the paper and help her wipe herself. To avoid vaginal infections, teach girls to wipe from front to back. Say and sign PLACE. Place your hand over the child's hand. Help her drop the paper into the toilet. Repeat this process until the child is clean.

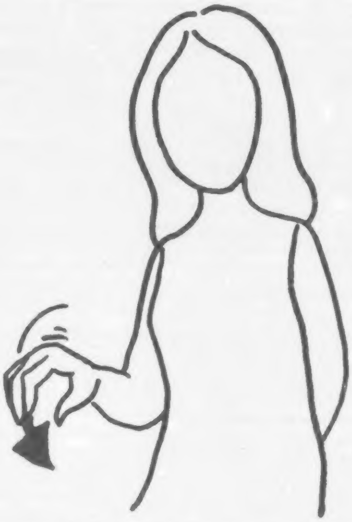
2. Say and sign TOILET PAPER. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

TOILET PAPER



3. Say and sign PLACE. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

PLACE



Teaching the Child to Get Up from the Toilet

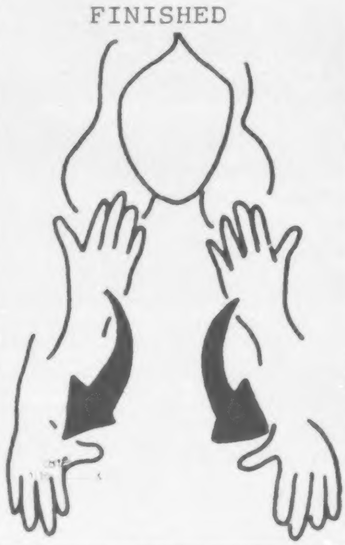
1. When the child is finished on the toilet, say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Then, say and sign STAND UP. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

When the child is standing up, say and sign PANTS UP. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. Place your hands over his on the waistband and pull up.

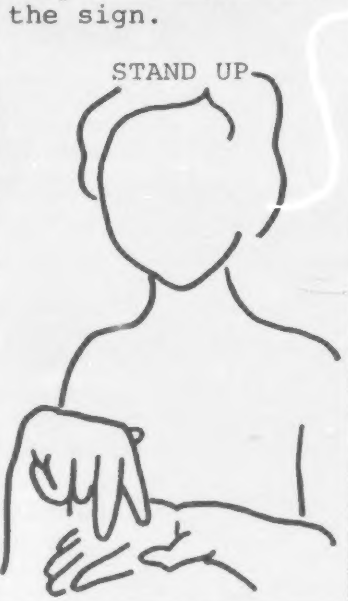
If the child does not have good balance, or cannot stand alone, let him lean against you as he pulls up his pants.

As the child becomes used to this routine, encourage him to do it by himself. If he needs a reminder, have him repeat the sign. Tug up on his pants gently. Praise him when he tries.

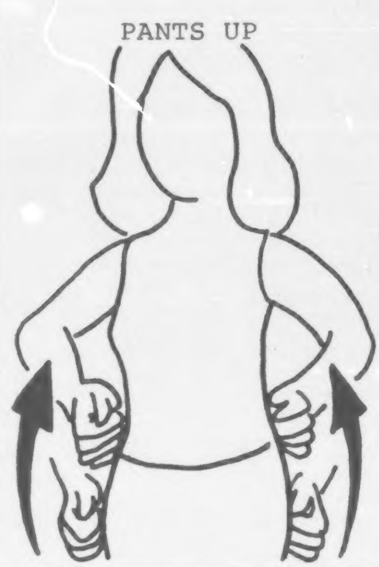
2. Say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.



3. Say and sign STAND UP. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.



4. Say and sign PANTS UP. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.



Teaching the Child to Put On Clean Pants

1. If the child has wet his pants, he must learn to put on dry ones. Say and sign SIT DOWN. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. When he is sitting on the floor, have him extend his legs, one at a time. Help him put his feet through each pant leg.

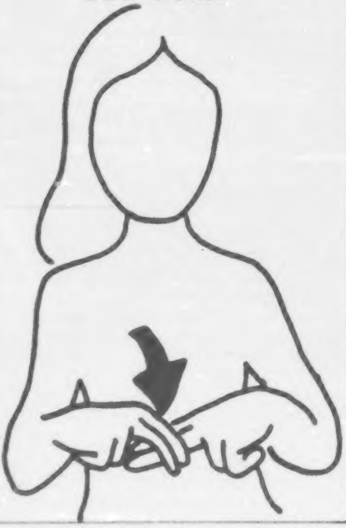
When the pants are over his legs, say and sign STAND UP. Repeat the words as you help him make the sign. Then, help him stand up.

When he is standing, say and sign PANTS UP. Repeat the words as you help him make the sign. Place your hands over his on the waistband and pull up.

Encourage him to do this by himself. If he needs a reminder, have him make the signs again and tug gently on his pants. Praise him when he tries.

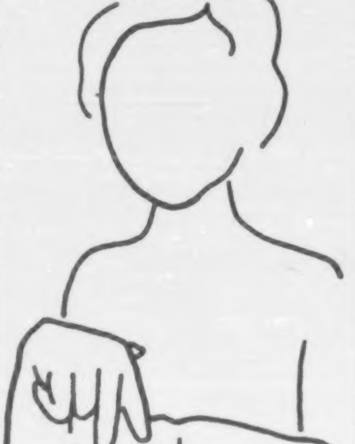
2. Say and sign SIT DOWN. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

SIT DOWN



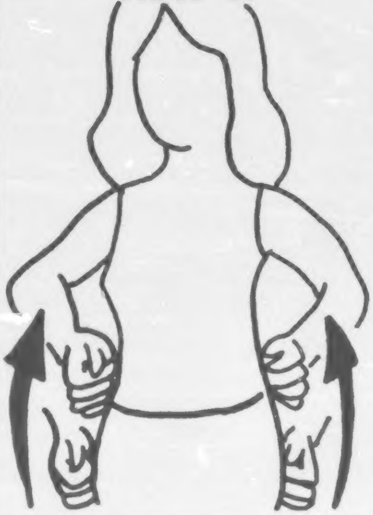
3. Say and sign STAND UP. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

STAND UP



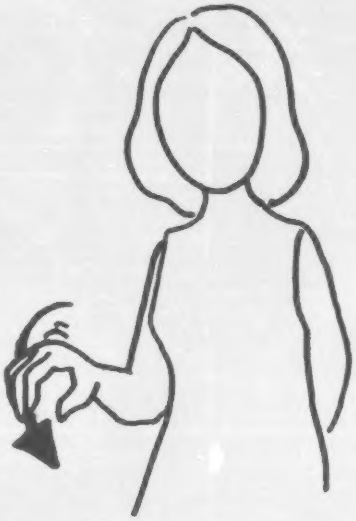
4. Say and sign PANTS UP. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

PANTS UP



Teaching the Child to Flush the Toilet

1. Say and sign FLUSH THE TOILET. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.



FLUSH THE TOILET

2. Say and sign FLUSH THE TOILET. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. Place your hand over his and help him push the handle down. As the child becomes used to this routine, gradually withdraw your support. Encourage him to flush the toilet by himself. Help him make the sign again and tap his hand gently if he needs to be reminded.

Teaching the Child to Wash His Hands

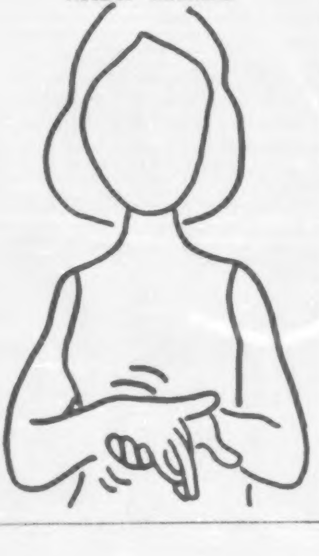
1. Say and sign WASH HANDS. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. Lead him to the sink.

Say and sign WATER. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Place your hands over his and turn on the cold water first. Then turn on the warm water.

Say and sign SOAP. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. With your hands over his, help him rub the soap into a lather.

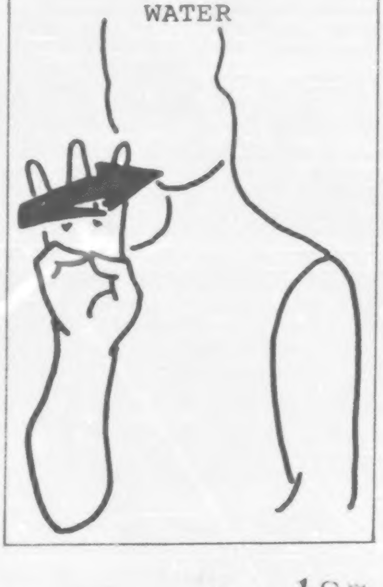
2. Say and sign WASH HANDS. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

WASH HANDS



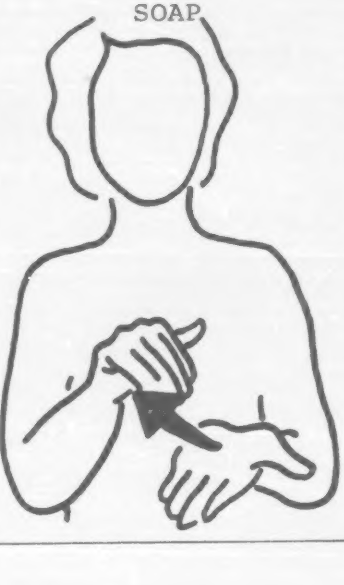
3. Say and sign WATER. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

WATER



4. Say and sign SOAP. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

SOAP



Teaching the Child to Wash His Hands (cont.)

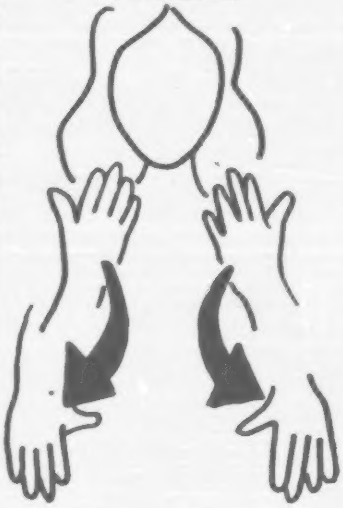
5. After rinsing the child's hands, say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. With your hands over his, turn the water off.

Say and sign TOWEL. Repeat the word as you make the sign. Help him find the towel. Dry his hands.

Say and sign PLACE. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. Place your hands over his and help him hang up the towel. Or, if it is a paper towel, throw it away.

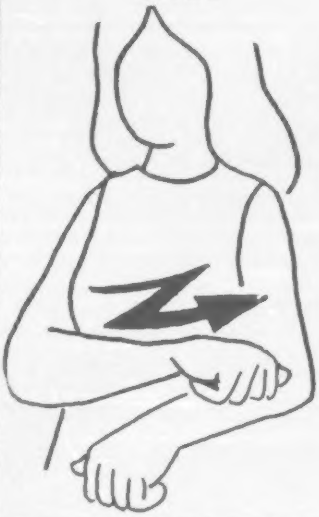
6. Say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

FINISHED



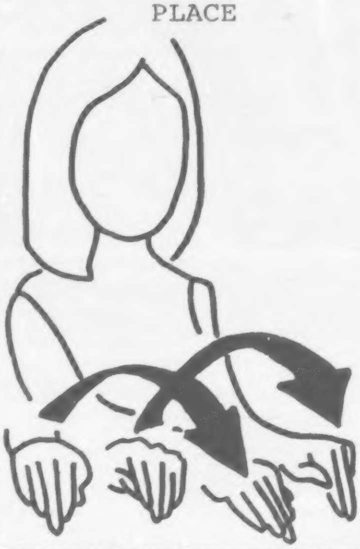
7. Say and sign TOWEL. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

TOWEL



8. Say and sign PLACE. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

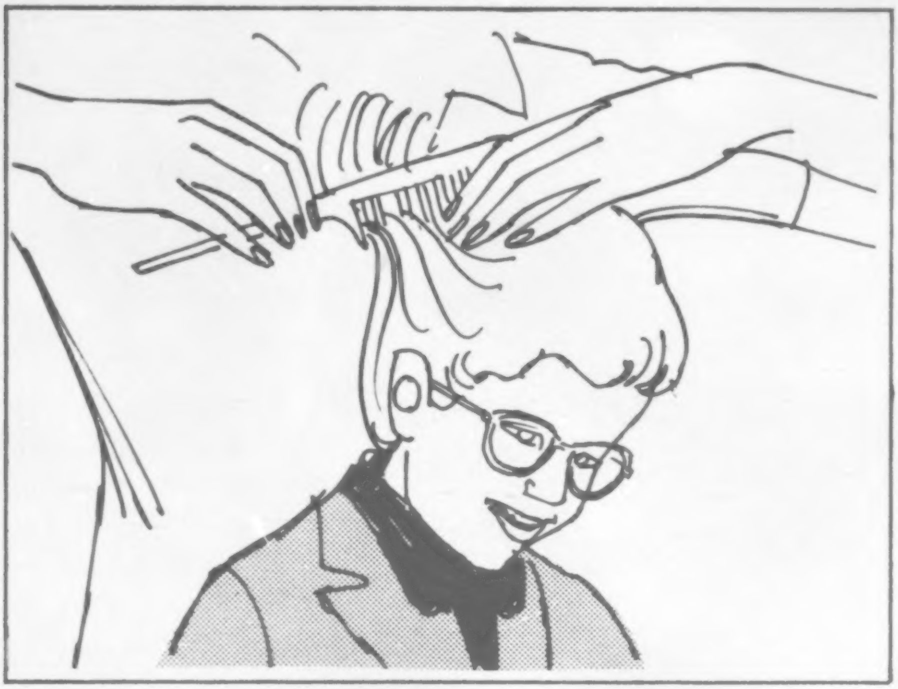
PLACE



When the child has finished toileting, encourage him to return to the area where he belongs by himself. Give him the directions he needs. Say and sign bed, eat, play, etc. Help him make the sign. Start him walking in the right direction. If he forgets where he is going, remind him by helping him make the sign again and pushing him gently from behind.

INTRODUCTION TO PERSONAL HYGIENE

Deaf-blind children need lots of attention. They need close personal contact. They need to be loved, they need to be touched. This means they need to be clean. After all, who wants to touch someone who is dirty or smells bad?

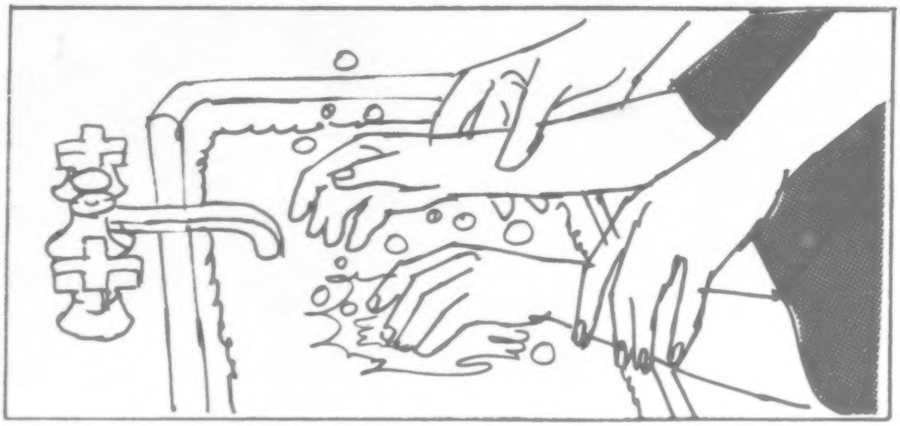


People like being around a child who is clean, neat and attractive. They will spend more time with him. They are more willing to touch him, to hold him, and to give him the attention he needs. Clean clothes, cared-for teeth, neatly brushed hair, and a freshly washed body will help any child be more appealing.

Your goal is to help the child develop the skills he needs to keep himself clean and neat. You can help the children you care for learn to wash their hands, wash their faces, and take a bath. You can help them learn to brush their teeth and brush their hair.

At first, the children cannot do these things alone. You will have to help them. Step by step go through each activity with them. As they become used to the routine, let them do more and more by themselves.

Progress will be slow. A child may not want to accept your help. He may fight you, especially at first. Don't be discouraged. Deaf-blind children often dislike trying new things. Sometimes they don't understand. Sometimes they are afraid. Be patient. Keep trying. Learning will come, one step at a time.



Using Lots of Praise

Trying something new is a big step for anyone. The deaf-blind child is going to need lots of encouragement. Praise him whenever he tries. Praise him immediately.

Hug him, touch him. Tell him how glad you are. You may know something special that pleases him - a glass of water, a toy, a piece of gum or a cracker. Share your pleasure with him.

Speaking and Signing

You can learn to communicate with your children by using words and signs. Signs are included with every activity. Do not use signs alone. Say the word, then make the sign. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

If the child has no vision, say the word and make the sign with the child's hands. After the child knows the sign, you can make the sign into his hands.

Use the signs and words to let the child know what you are going to do. Connect words and signs with an immediate action. If you sign WASH HANDS, wash the child's hands right away. Don't wait. Speak, sign, and act.

At first, the child will not know what the signs or the words mean. You must use the same words with the same activity. You must do this many times before the child knows what you mean. For example, if you say and sign the words WASH HANDS every time you wash his hands, he will begin to understand.

Your children need to know what you want them to do. When they don't understand, they may be afraid or do the wrong thing.

You can build understanding. Say and sign the word. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Wait a moment. Give him time to act. If he doesn't act, help him. If he starts to do the wrong thing, stop him. Help him make the sign again. Then help him do the activity correctly. When a child understands, he can cooperate or do things independently.

Communicate with children as often as you can. Talk to them whenever you work with them. Making conversation increases their awareness of you and of the world around them. So, talk about what you are doing, talk about how you feel. Talk about anything that interests you. But talk. Talk a lot. The more you talk, the more aware the child is going to become.

Helping the Child Know What Is His

Using a certain color or a certain texture can help a child know what belongs to him. Choose one color or one texture and use it on all his belongings. Mark his cup, toothbrush, comb or brush. If everything he uses is marked with a small circle of bright yellow terry cloth, he will soon learn which things are his.

Developing a Routine

The child's routine should be the same each day. A set order for everyday things makes it easier for him to learn; even small changes may be confusing. Decide on a routine and try to stay with it. Each skill, like washing hands, brushing teeth or taking a bath is developed as a separate skill.

Your goal is a child who is as independent as possible. We all learn by doing. That means you must let the child try. If he makes a mistake, help him do the activity correctly, and praise him for trying. Never scold or punish him for trying to do something for himself. Be glad he is willing to try. Next time might be better.

Taking Care of the Child's Teeth

Many deaf-blind children have poor teeth. The reasons for this differ. Some of these children grind their teeth or don't eat well. Others have generally poor health. Daily brushing and regular checkups may improve their teeth. Children should be seen by a dentist at least once a year. Discuss special problems with the dentist.

Some deaf-blind children may object to using a toothbrush. Be gentle, but persistent. Children can learn to use a toothbrush. Some children will enjoy using a battery-operated toothbrush. They like the vibrations.

Keep the child's toothbrush in the same place all the time. If possible, keep it in a holder the child can reach easily. His tumbler or cup and toothpaste should also be kept in one place, so that he can find them easily. If paper cups are used, make sure the dispenser is in a place he can reach.

Using Toothpaste

When using toothpaste, use a very small amount. Try a mild flavor. Experiment if necessary to find one the child likes. Some toothpaste comes in short tubes with large caps. These may be easier for the child to use.

You may feel that you need to brush the child's teeth for him, to make sure that it is done well. But if you always do it for him, he will never learn how. Remember that your goal is to help the child learn to brush his teeth by himself. Encourage him to take over gradually.

Working together can be fun. If he can see, help him fix his hair in front of a mirror. Talk to him as you brush his hair. Tell him how nice he looks. He can feel good about looking good.

Choose an easy-to-care-for way for the child to wear his hair. Keep it neat and attractive. Long, loose hair may interfere with the child's vision. Barrettes or bands will help keep hair neat.

Brush the child's hair as often as possible. Be sure to brush it every morning and after a nap. Use a small brush with soft bristles.

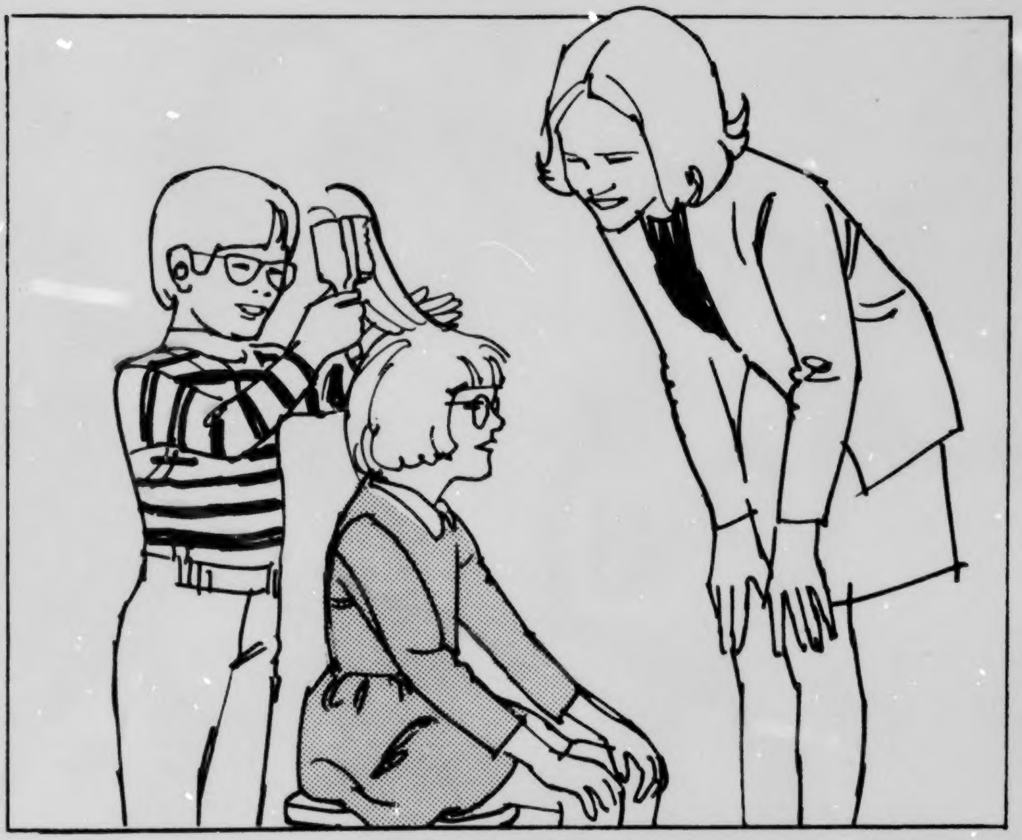
Don't pull at tangles. Brush the ends of his hair first. Work your way up towards his scalp.

Color or texture code the child's brush and comb and keep them in the same place.

The deaf-blind child's hair may be thin, dry, and brittle. If the child has spent a lot of time in bed, his hair may be broken and almost rubbed off across the back of his head.

Regular washing in the bath, shower or sink will help improve the way his hair looks. If his hair is very dry, rub a little lanolin into it.

The child may be afraid when you wash his hair. If so, work slowly and gently. Use words and signs to let him know what is happening. Let him feel the water. Let him feel the soap suds. Gradually he will become used to the routine.



Caring for Others

When the child has learned to brush his own hair, help him brush someone else's. Or let him try to brush your hair. This will help him become more aware of himself as well as more aware of others.

A bath should be something the child looks forward to. Bath time should be a relaxing and pleasant time for the child. It can be a special time for you both.

Bath water should be deep enough to cover the child's legs. Dribble water playfully over the child's arms and hands, legs and feet. Talk about the water, the soap, the washcloth. Talk about his hands, his feet, his face, all of his body as you wash him. This will help the child become more aware of his body.

Bath time is a good time for exercise. The warm water will relax the child. Gently move his limbs to exercise his muscles.

Bath time is also a good time to observe the child. Look for skin problems: bruises, cuts, sores, rashes.

Never, never leave a child alone in the bathtub. Prevent accidents.

Bath time should be a pleasant time for you, too. Be sure to work at a comfortable level. If you must lift the child, bend your knees. This is for your safety.

If the child cannot hold the washcloth, use a mitt. If the soap gets lost, try using the kind attached to a string. Hang it on his wrist or from a peg on the wall.

You can make these yourself by putting a cord through a bar of soap. Tie a knot at one end, and leave a loop at the other end.

If you use a shower, use the same routine as with the tub. Be sure the water is a comfortable temperature. Don't let the water spray in his face. It may be easier, at first, for the adult to be in the shower with the child.

You might want to try bathing or showering more than one child at a time. It is a good way to increase the child's awareness of himself and others.

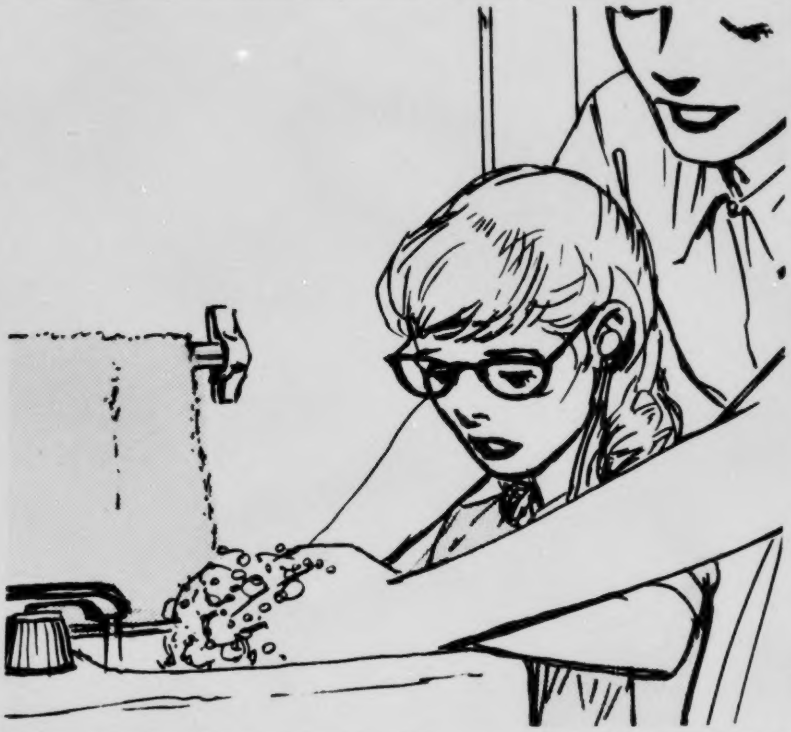
It is a big step for the child to learn to bathe himself. He needs lots of praise. You need lots of patience. Don't rush him. Bath time is a learning time. Take time to let him try. Ignore the mistakes he makes and praise him when he tries. You want the child to enjoy taking a bath.

Teaching the Child to Wash Her Hands

1. Say and sign WASH HANDS. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. Lead him to the sink.

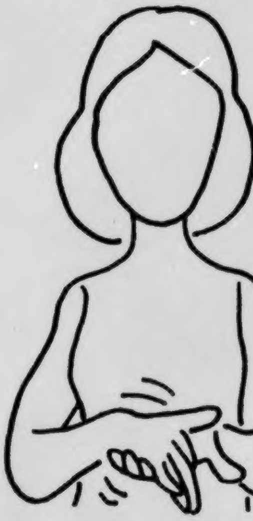
Say and sign WATER. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Place your hands over hers and help her turn on the water. Turn on the cold water first and then the warm water.

Say and sign SOAP. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. With your hands over hers, help her rub the soap into a lather.



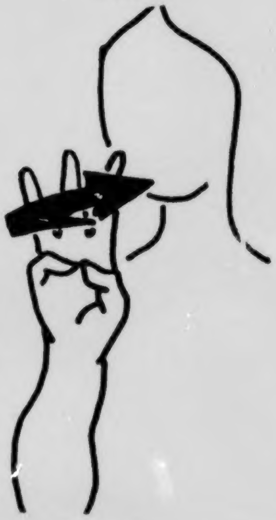
2. Say and sign WASH HANDS. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

WASH HANDS



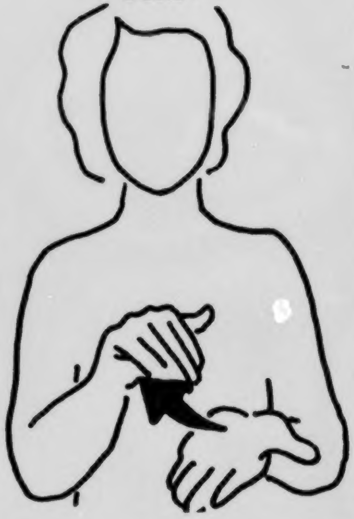
3. Say and sign WATER. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

WATER



4. Say and sign SOAP. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

SOAP

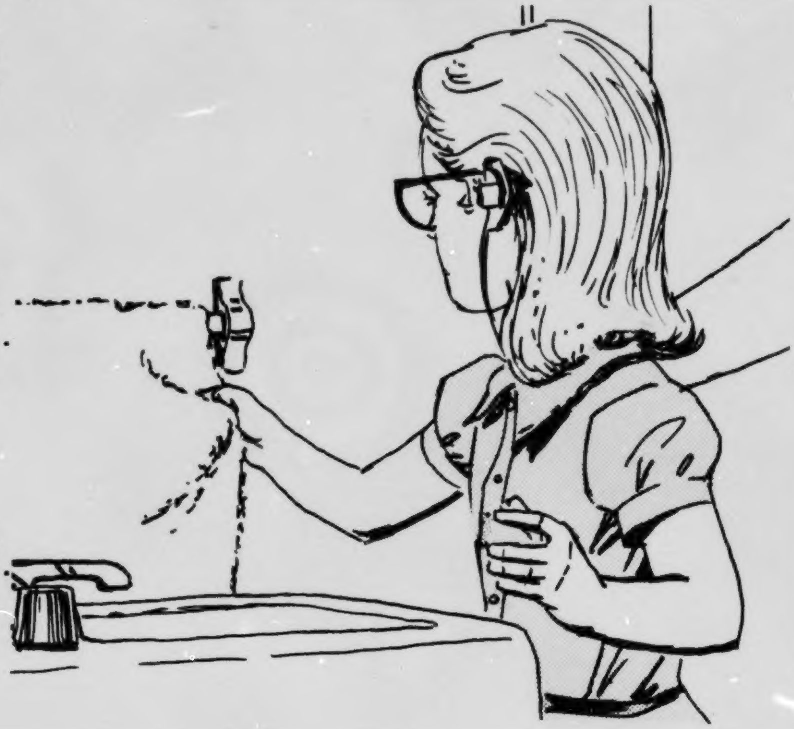


Teaching the Child to Wash Her Hands (cont.)

5. After rinsing the child's hands, say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you help her make the sign. With your hands over hers, turn off the water.

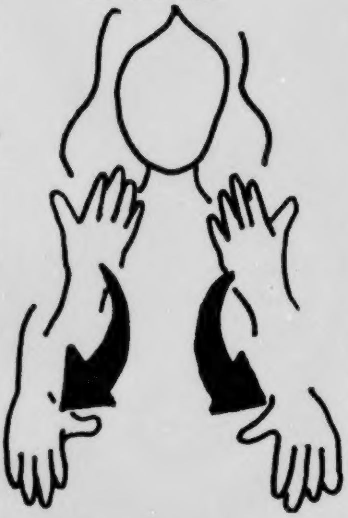
Say and sign TOWEL. Repeat the word as you help her make the sign. With your hands over hers, help her locate the towel and dry her hands.

Say and sign PLACE. Repeat the word as you help her make the sign. Place your hands over hers and help her hang up the towel. Or, if it is a paper towel, throw it away.



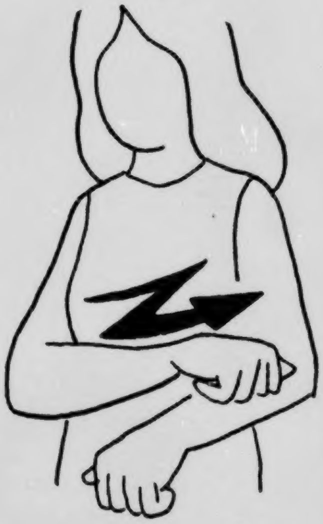
6. Say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

FINISHED



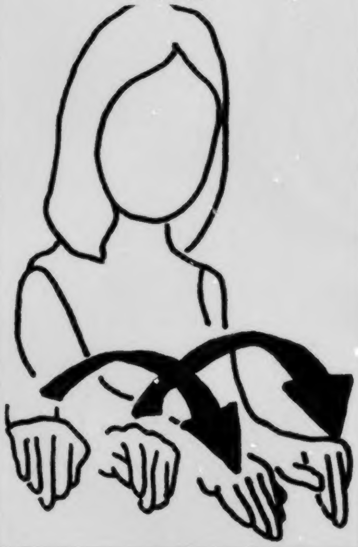
7. Say and sign TOWEL. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

TOWEL



8. Say and sign PLACE. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

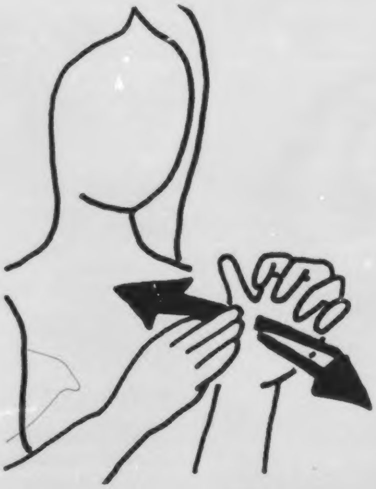
PLACE



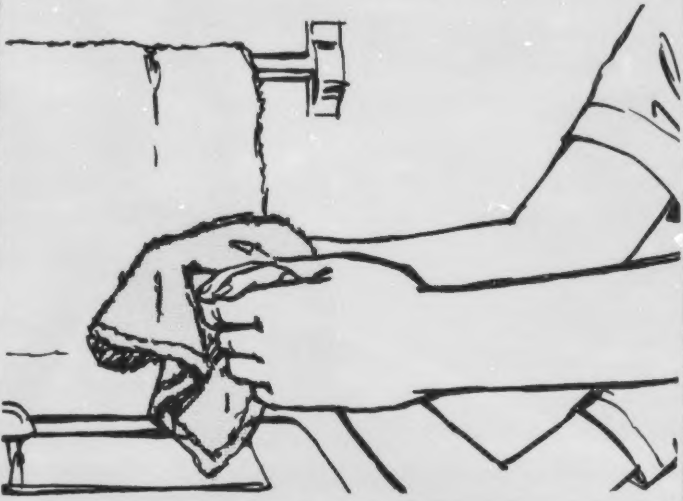
Teaching the Child to Keep His Nails Clean

1. Say and sign WASH NAILS. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

WASH NAILS



2. Say and sign WASH NAILS. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. With your hands over his, pick up the nail brush and help him scrub his nails. If a brush is not available, use a washcloth. Rub firmly around each nail.



3. Short nails are easy to keep clean. Use safety scissors or clippers to cut the nails. If the child's coordination is good enough, put your hands over his and help him cut his nails. If not, do it for him. Toenails should also be kept short. The best time to cut toenails is when bathing and the nails are soft.

Teaching the Child to Wash His Face

1. Say and sign WASH FACE. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. Lead him to the sink.

Say and sign WATER. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. Place your hands over his and turn on the water. Turn on the cold water first, and then the warm.

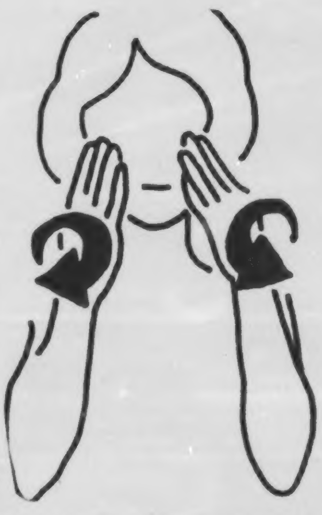
Without any soap and with your hands over his, help him wash around his eyes.

Then, say and sign SOAP. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. With your hands over his, help him rub the soap into a lather and wash the rest of his face.

Be careful to keep the soap out of his eyes.

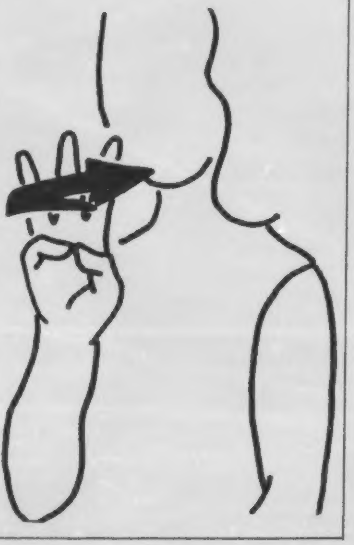
2. Say and sign WASH FACE. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

WASH FACE



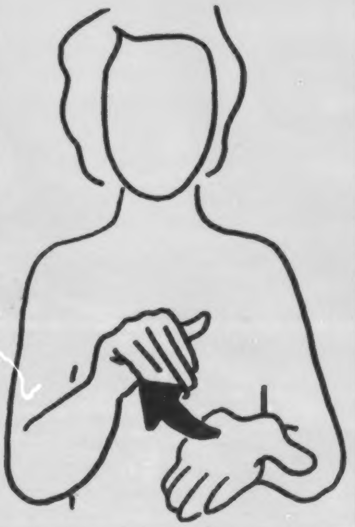
3. Say and sign WATER. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

WATER



4. Say and sign SOAP. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign.

SOAP



Teaching the Child to Wash His Face (cont.)

5. Rinse his hands, and with your hands still over his, help him rinse the soap off his face.

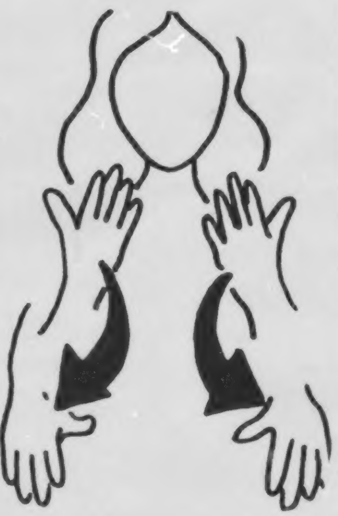
After making sure that all the soap is off his face, say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. With your hands over his, turn off the water.

Say and sign TOWEL. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. With your hands over his, help him locate the towel and dry his face.

Say and sign PLACE. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. Place your hands over his and help him hang up the towel. Or, if it is a paper towel, throw it away.

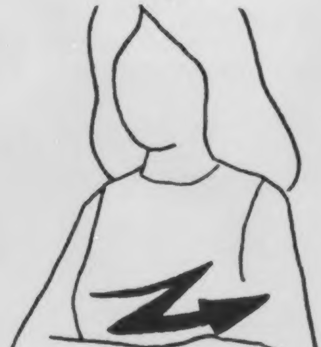
6. Say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

FINISHED



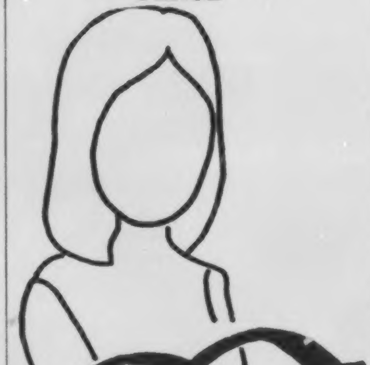
7. Say and sign TOWEL. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

TOWEL



8. Say and sign PLACE. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

PLACE



Teaching the Child to Brush Her Teeth

1. Say and sign BRUSH TEETH. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

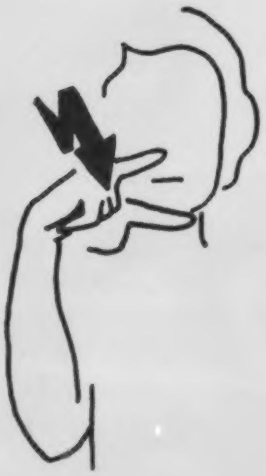
Say and sign WATER. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Place your hands over hers and turn on the cold water.

With your hands over hers, dip her forefinger in the water and use her finger to massage her gums and teeth. Do not put your finger in her mouth. This activity will help her accept the experience and learn the routine.

Say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you help her make the sign. With your hand over hers, turn off the water.

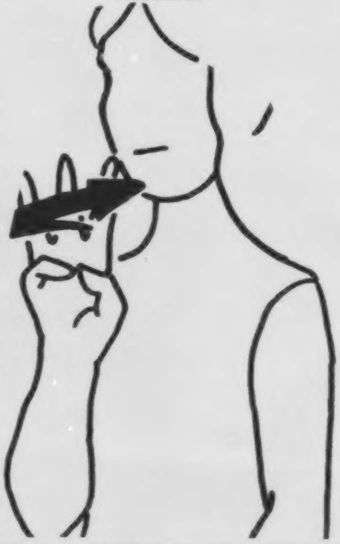
2. Say and sign BRUSH TEETH. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign.

BRUSH TEETH



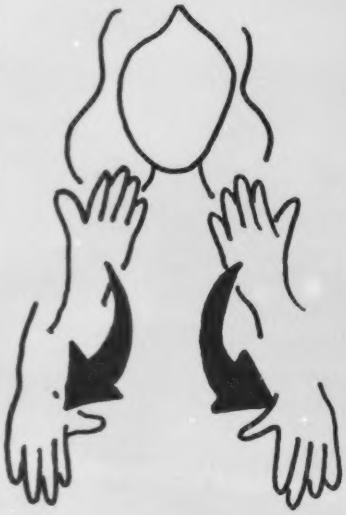
3. Say and sign WATER. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

WATER



4. Say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

FINISHED



Teaching the Child to Use Toothpaste

1. After turning on the water, say and sign TOOTHPASTE. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. With your hand over hers, get the tube.

Say and sign OPEN. Repeat the word as you help her make the sign. With your hand over hers, open the tube and lay the top on the sink.

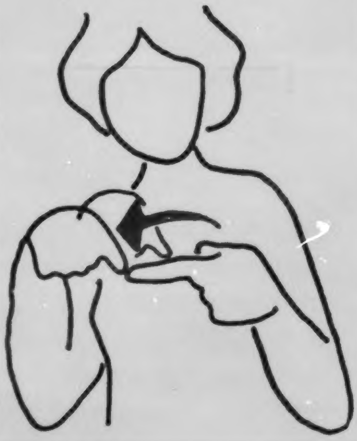
With your hand still over hers, take the toothbrush and help her squeeze a small amount of the paste on the brush. Lay the tube down and help her brush her teeth gently.

Rinse the brush in water and repeat until her mouth and brush are clean. Say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you help her make the sign with your hand over hers, help her put her toothbrush away and turn off the water.

Say and sign CLOSE. Repeat the word as you help her make the sign. With your hand over hers, help her put the cap back on the toothpaste and put the tube away.

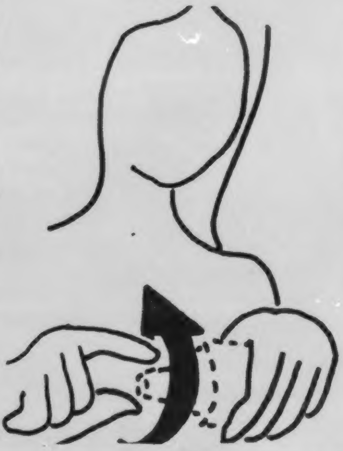
2. Say and sign TOOTHPASTE. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

TOOTHPASTE



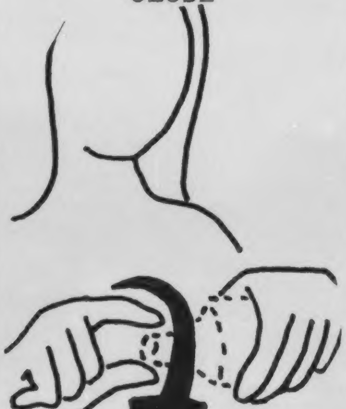
3. Say and sign OPEN. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

OPEN



4. Say and sign CLOSE. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

CLOSE

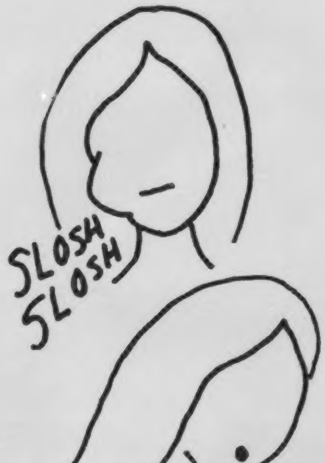


Teaching the Child to Rinse His Mouth

1. After the child has finished brushing his teeth, say and sign RINSE. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. With your hand over his, take his tumbler and fill it with water. Let him rinse his mouth by drinking the water or spitting it out. Say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. With your hand over his, help him put his glass away.

2. Say and sign RINSE. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

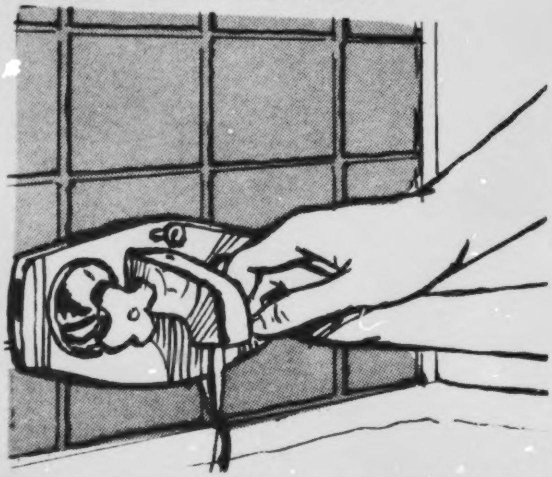
RINSE



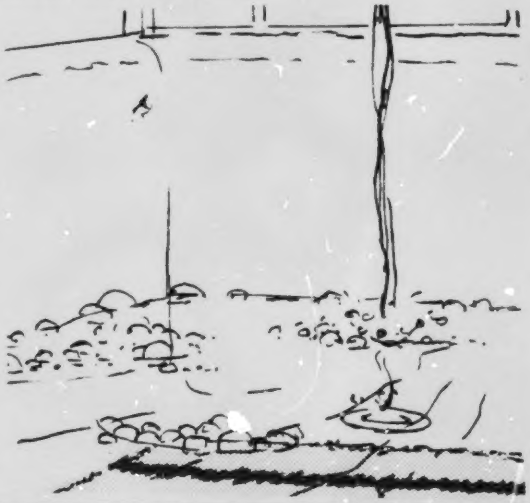
3. If you do not want the child to swallow the water when he rinses his mouth, you can teach him to spit it out. Take some water in your mouth and spit it into the sink. Help him imitate you.

Teaching the Child to Take a Bath

1. Say and sign BATH. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Lead him to the tub. Say and sign WATER. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. With your hand over his, help him turn on the water. Turn on the cold water first. Then the warm.

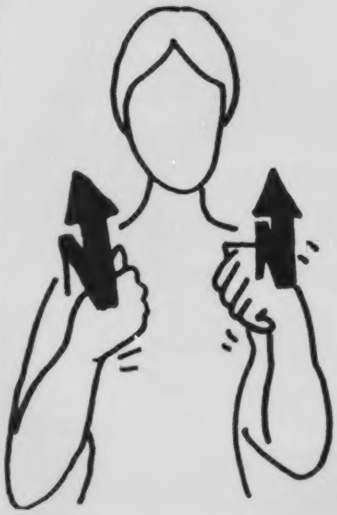


2. Help the child into the tub. If the tub does not have a non-slip bottom, place a towel in the bottom for safety. After the child steps in, say and sign SIT DOWN. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.



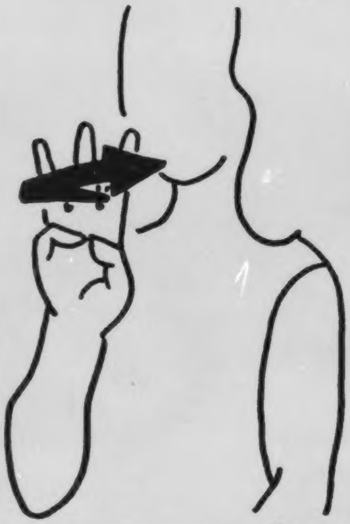
3. Say and sign BATH. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

BATH



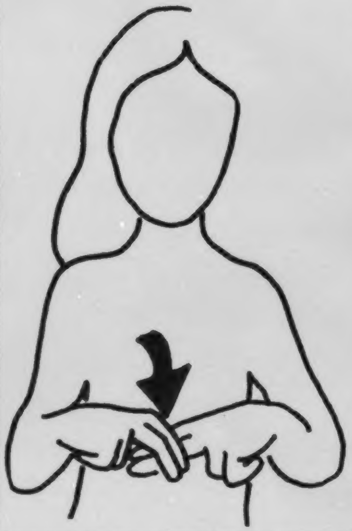
4. Say and sign WATER. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

WATER



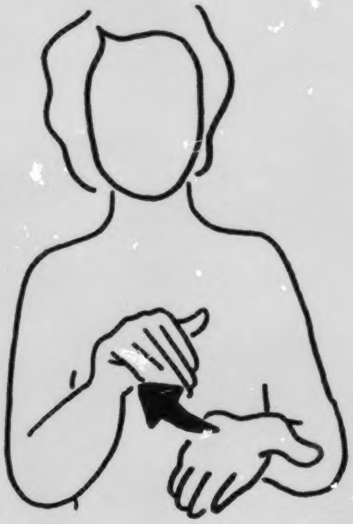
5. Say and sign SIT DOWN. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

SIT DOWN



Teaching the Child to Take a Bath (cont.)

6. Say and sign SOAP. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.



SOAP

7. Say and sign WASH. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. With your hand over his, pick up the washcloth. Say and sign SOAP. Repeat the word as you help him make the sign. With your hand over his, help him pick up the soap.

Keep your hand over his as you help him rub the soap on the cloth, and wash his body. Stroke him firmly but gently as you wash. This helps him become aware of the different parts of his body.

Name each part of the body as you help him wash. Talk to him. Tell him that soap is slippery or that you are washing his hand or his foot or whatever it is that you are doing.

Teaching the Child to Take a Bath (cont.)

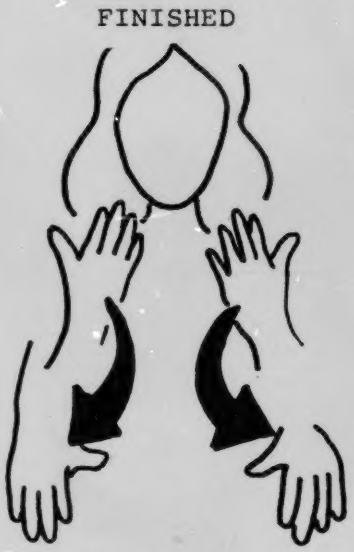
8. After washing the child, squeeze the cloth and dribble water over him. After he is used to this, trickle some water on his head. Talk about the water. Make it fun.

Or, take the child's hands and splash them in the water. Tell him what you are doing. Say Splash! Splash! Splash! Play with him. Make it fun.

9. Bath time can serve many purposes. It cleans the child. Rubbing his skin with the washcloth stimulates his circulation. The warm water relaxes him. It is a place for enjoyment, for talking and being touched. It is also a good place and time for you to observe the child. Look for any sores or rashes on his skin, or any cuts and bruises.

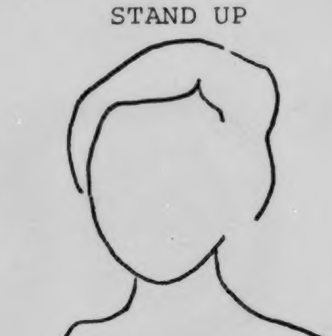
Teaching the Child to Take a Bath (cont.)

10. Say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.



11. Say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. With your hand over his, help him put the soap and washcloth away.

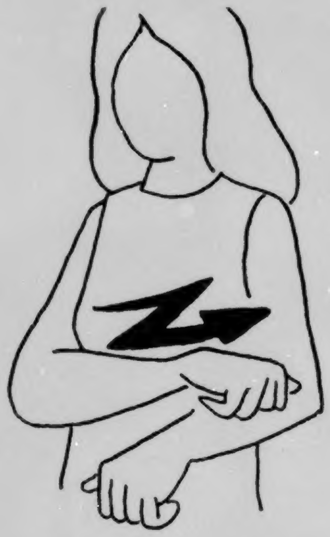
12. Say and sign STAND UP. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.



13. Say and sign STAND UP. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Hold the child's hands and help her stand up and step out of the tub.

Teaching the Child to Take a Bath (cont.)

14. Say and sign TOWEL. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.



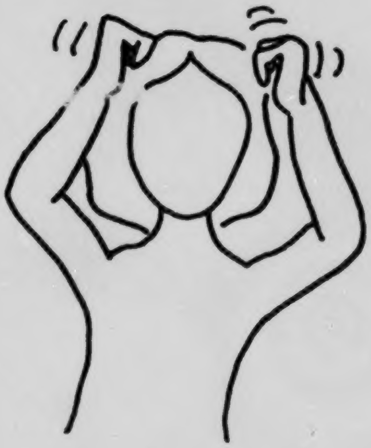
15. Say and sign TOWEL. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. With your hand over hers, help the child child pick up the towel and dry herself. Rub her firmly but gently, drying her carefully and thoroughly.

16. Say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. With your hand over his, help him put the towel away and get dressed.

Teaching the Child to Wash Her Hair

1. Say and sign WASH HAIR. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

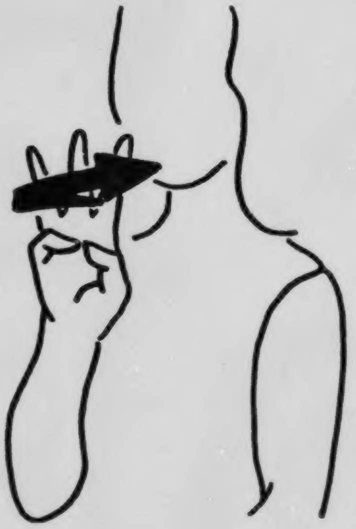
WASH HAIR



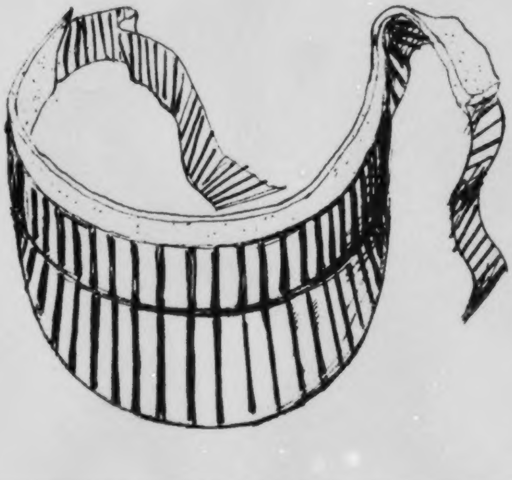
2. Say and sign WASH HAIR. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. Say and sign WATER. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. With your hand over hers, help her turn the cold water on and then the warm. Keep the water temperature comfortable to her hand. Use a spray nozzle or a cup to wet her hair. Keep your hand over hers and help her wet her hair. Tilt her head back slightly to keep the water out of her eyes.

3. Say and sign WATER. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

WATER



4. You may want to make a shampoo shade by lining a visor with foam rubber.



Teaching the Child to Wash Her Hair (cont.)

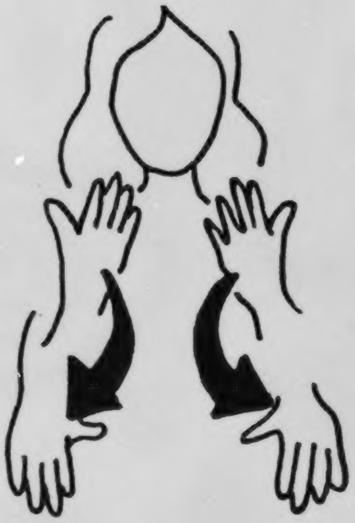
5. Pour a little shampoo on the child's head, and with your hands over hers, work up a lather. Jelly or creme type shampoos won't run into her eyes as easily as liquid types.

If the child likes the shampoo, let her shape it into peaks and look in the mirror. Laugh and make it fun.

When you are done, be sure to rinse her hair thoroughly.

6. Say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign.

FINISHED

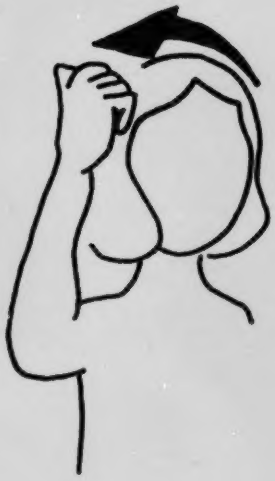


7. When the child's hair is rinsed, say and sign FINISHED. Repeat the word as you help the child make the sign. With your hand over his, pick up a towel and help him dry his hair.

Teaching the Child to Comb His Hair

1. Say and sign COMB HAIR. Repeat the words and help the child make the sign.

COMB HAIR



2. Say and sign COMB HAIR. Repeat the words as you help the child make the sign. With your hand over hers, help her pick up the comb and comb her hair. If it is very tangled, a creme rinse or no-tangle spray will make it easier to comb. Start from the bottom and work up to prevent pulling.

3. If the child has some vision, comb his hair in front of the mirror. With your hand over his, help him make a part. Have him run his finger along the part. If his hair is dry, it might be easier to brush it. Use the same sign and method as for combing. Short hair is easier for him to comb and brush himself, but whatever the length, help him keep it neat and clean.

INTRODUCTION TO PLAY

Children learn to play by watching other children. Deaf-blind children cannot do this. Their lack of vision and hearing traps them inside themselves. They are unaware of other people and things around them. Except for the adults who care for their basic needs, they are alone.

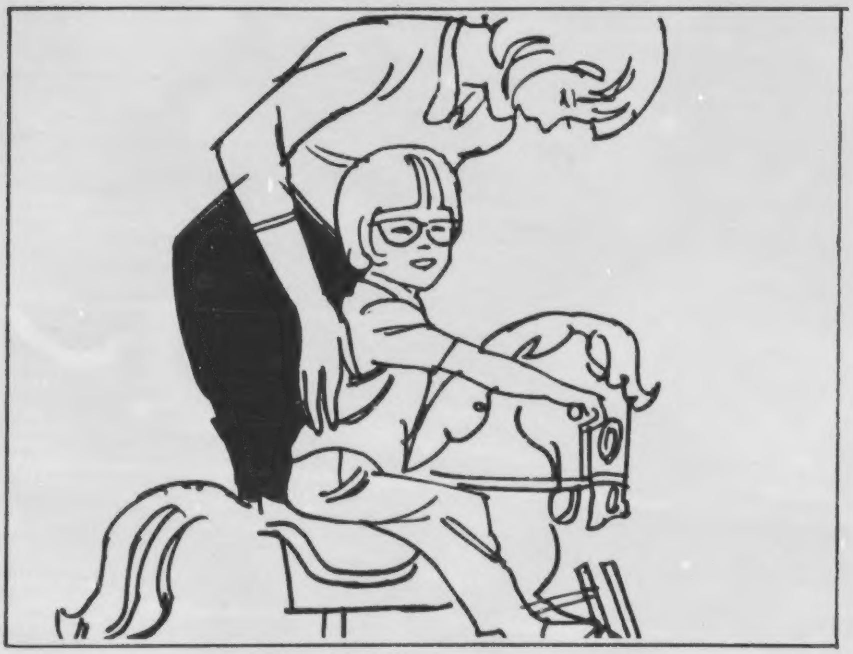
Deaf-blind children may act differently than other children. They may rock, stare at lights, walk around aimlessly, or explode in anger, hurting themselves and destroying the things around them.

We can help them learn better ways to act. Making them more aware of you, and of others, will show them better ways to act. Making them more aware of the world around them teaches them to enjoy other activities. They can learn from you.

Deaf-blind children may not be able to see and hear what is going on around them. So, they have little interest in anything but the things they can touch and feel. A deaf-blind child explores the world through physical contact.

When you show a deaf-blind child a new object, let him examine it thoroughly. If it is small enough to hold in his hands, let him do so. If it is too large to hold, help him move around so he can feel every part of it. If a toy is on the floor, get on the floor with him and help him examine it. Remember, he must be very close to any object so he can touch, feel and sense what it is.

Once the child has examined a new object, you can show him how to use it. If you touch him, hold him, guide him through all the motions, he will learn new ways to play. As his body goes through these motions with you, the child will be physically close to you. Your constant support and praise will help him develop a better, more social, relationship with you. He will also be learning new ways of moving, acting, and thinking.



Children learn through play. Play is more than just physical contact, or movement, or body development. Children use play to think about their experiences, and to use them in new ways. Play gives children a chance to use both their bodies and their minds.

Children learn many things by crawling under a table, moving around a chair, or trying on a hat. They learn they are separate from other objects. They learn how big or how small they are. They learn new ways to move and to explore new places.

The way we act always shows on the outside how we feel on the inside. If a child is bored or angry, happy or frustrated, he shows this in the way he moves and acts. He shows how he feels by what he does - or doesn't do.

Everyone is different. One person tries to do something. If he fails, he may just give up and sit. He does not try again.

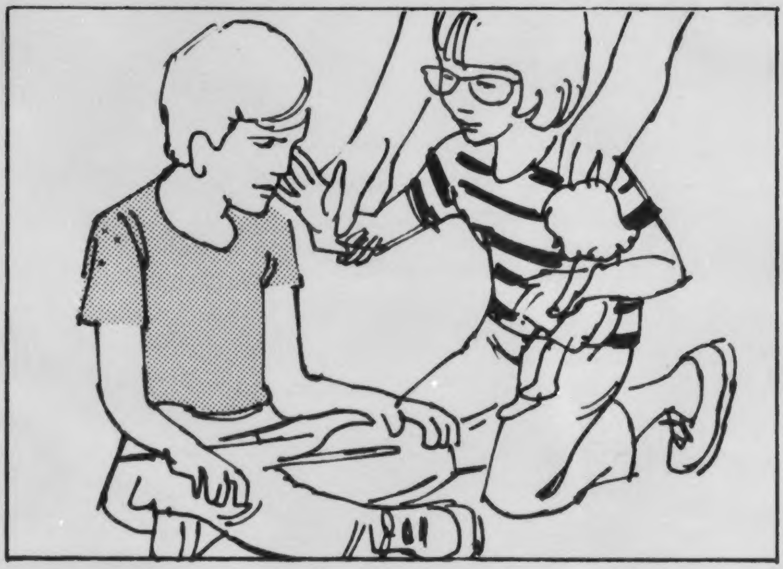
Another person tries and fails. He becomes angry. He hits, kicks, and bites. He wants to hurt or destroy anything he can touch.

There are better ways to act. The child, with your help, can learn them. As his actions begin to change, his feelings change, too. When he acts better, he feels better. When he acts better, you feel better.

It is hard to like people when they hit or kick or bite. It makes us angry and uncomfortable. When a child acts better, you will like him better. So be firm. Be persistent. Help these children learn.

Building Trust

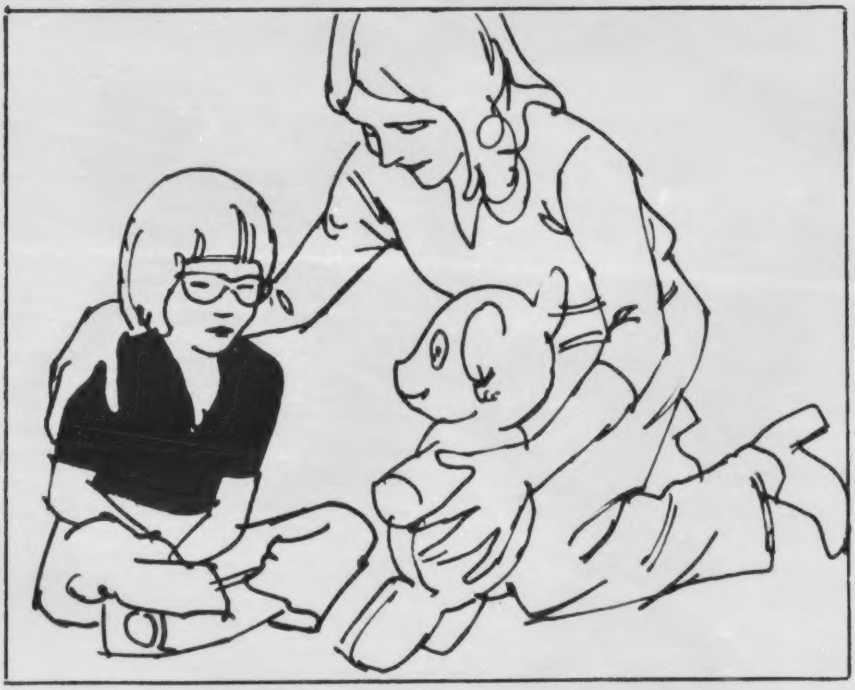
Your goal is to encourage independence in daily living skills. This means that skills are not your only objective. You want the child to be relaxed, to feel secure, and to have trust.



Deaf-blind children may be easily confused. It may be difficult for them to identify everything around them. They may be frightened by too many choices or unfamiliar things. They don't know what to do. For this reason, introduce new things, and new people, one at a time.

Providing a Variety of Experiences

At first, the child may not be interested in new things or in learning new ways. He may actively refuse. He may be afraid. He may be angry. But you must persist. Be firm. Let him know he must do what you want. It takes a long time and many experiences together to build trust.



Use lots of praise and encouragement. If the child doesn't fight, if he doesn't resist, praise or reward him. If he begins to cooperate, praise him even more.

Don't pull or jerk at the child to get him to do something. Don't yell and don't push. Be reassuring. Make him feel secure. Let him know it's safe to do this. You are there. You are going to help him. He is going to like it.

Once his initial fear is gone, his skill will increase. Some of the new things and activities you have introduced will become his favorites. Then he will want to do them with you.

Meeting a Basic Need

Physical movement is a basic need of all people. We walk and stretch and complain if we have to sit around too much. We act better, we feel better, and we sleep better when we are physically active.

This is true for deaf-blind children, too. They will eat better, act better, and sleep better when they are physically active.

Solving Sleeping Problems

Sleep is often a problem for these children. They wake up at night, and they want to get up. If this happens, let them. Try something different.

Try running them around awhile - up and down the halls or around the room a few times. Let the child have a few moments to quiet down and relax. Then put him back to bed. You may find physical activity often helps the child return to a restful sleep. Some children may become too excited with exercise.

Meeting the Need to Be Challenged

Deaf-blind children are often overprotected and pampered. This is not good for them. They can learn to do things for themselves. Deaf-blind children do not need to depend on you all of the time. The more they do for themselves, the more confident they will become.

Teaching deaf-blind children to be independent may be hard on you. It takes time and energy. Sometimes it seems quicker and easier to do things for them. Resist temptation. The children will only learn what they do by themselves.

Learning What the Child Can Do

You may wonder if a child really can do this or that by himself. You worry that he'll hurt himself. If a deaf-blind child has many physical problems in addition to deafness and blindness, some activities may not be suitable.

You need to know exactly what these children can and cannot do. And, you need to know in terms that you can understand. Whenever you are in doubt, ask. Check with the child's doctor or therapist.

Don't make the mistake of overprotecting these children. Give them a chance to learn to do things. Even if they attend learning programs of other kinds, they need a chance to practice what they learn. Without constant repetition, skills are quickly forgotten. So, let them participate as best they can. Encourage them to try. Praise and reward them when they do.

Learning by Doing

Movement and play are not only for body development. Play involves thinking. Play helps children plan and control their behavior. Movement requires attention and concentration.

For example, if you bounce a child while he is lying on a waterbed, you are doing all the work. He will learn more if he is on his hands and knees, trying to balance while you bounce him. Then he, too, is working and learning.

Keep him on his knees. Don't let him lie down. A child will never learn by being passive. He can gain strength in his muscles. He can learn to balance his body. But he will only learn by having to do it.

Start with familiar things and skills used in new ways. For example, if the child can crawl, help him crawl through a tunnel or over a vinyl wedge. If he can walk, have him walk on textured rug squares, or on a soft mattress.

As the child succeeds and grows more confident, you can make an activity a little harder or even try new things. Remember, you want him to develop confidence and trust as well as skill.

Whatever you do with and for the child, remember that you want him to participate. You want him to control his body. You want him active. Your ultimate goal is an independent child.

Adapting Activities to Abilities

The activities in this section are not listed in developmental order. They are only suggestions you may find helpful. Each child is different. He has his own likes and dislikes, his own strengths and weaknesses. Try to find activities that will suit each child. Check with the doctor, therapist or other staff members working with each child for their suggestions.

Be creative. Try to think how you can help a child participate. You want him to be interested. You want him to be more active. You want him to succeed in what he does. Look for ways the child can do this.

Expecting Success

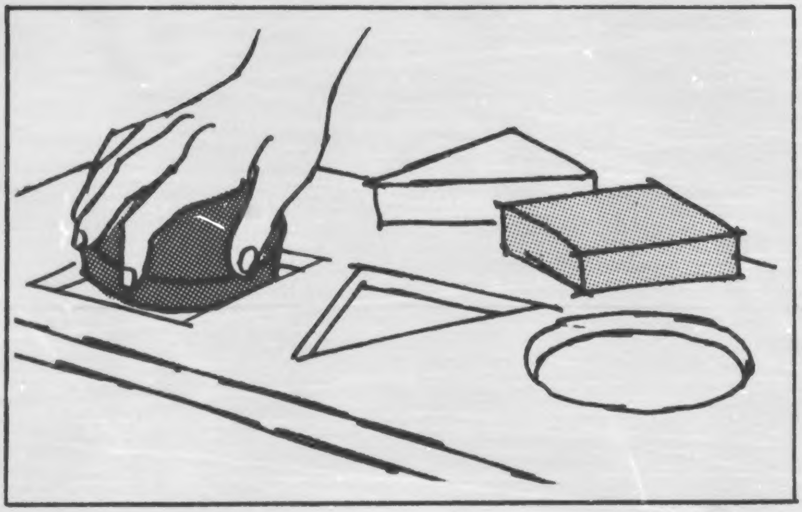
A child's feelings about himself often reflect the way others feel about him. Especially the way you feel about him. What you think of him, he thinks of himself. So it is important that you respect him. You must have confidence in his ability to learn and to do.

If you don't think he can do anything, you will be right. He will not do anything for you. But if you are sure that he can do certain activities and that he should do them, he probably will. If you expect him to achieve, he will try to respond.

You will like the child better because he can do things for himself. The child will like himself better because he can do things for himself.

Developing Skills Slowly

Skills will not develop suddenly.



Deaf-blind children learn from repetition.

This means you must repeat an activity over and over and over again before he will begin to learn.

Praise and Rewards for Trying

Each time he tries, praise and reward him immediately. Don't wait. Let him know right away how pleased you are. You want to make learning fun.

Always praise him with words. Tell him what you like. Tell him what he did right. Talk to him.

You may also want to reward him with food, with water, with toys, or with a tickle or pat. Some people use a vibrator. Others use a waterbed. What works for one child doesn't work for another. You must find what pleases that particular child if you are going to use rewards.

But whatever reward you use, always use praise with it. Use the words first, and use the words as you reward him. Make your approval the most important thing.

Importance of Body Awareness

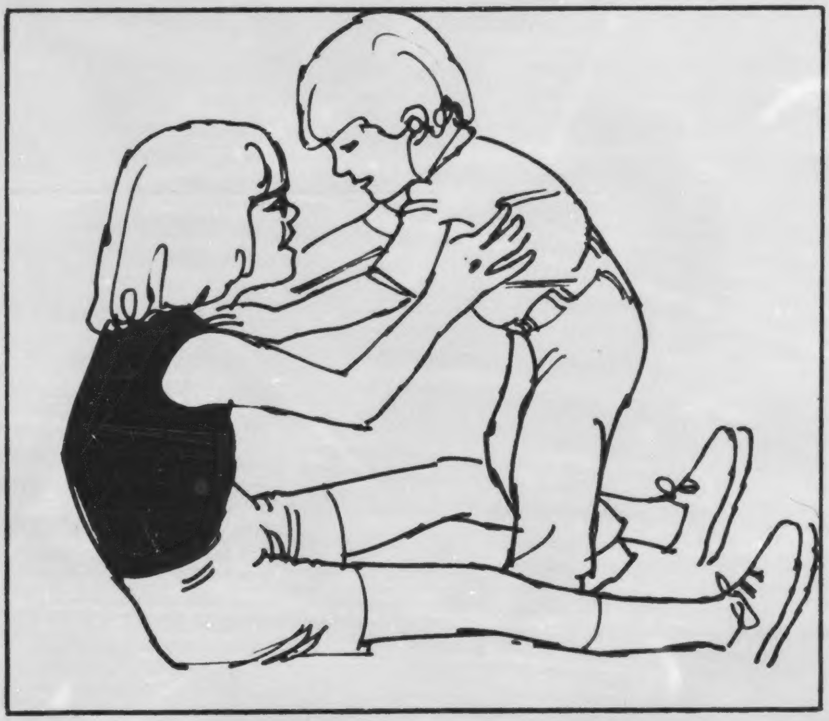
Body awareness means knowing your body. It means knowing how big you are. It means knowing how to move. It means knowing that arms and legs and ears and eyes are a part of you.

Body awareness is developed when you dress the child, feed the child, bathe the child. It is developed whenever you touch him. You can name the parts of his body as you wash him or dress him. Body awareness is developed when you talk to him about his body.

Body awareness is also developed by moving, by doing. As the child moves, he begins to develop better body movements. He becomes aware of his strength. He becomes aware of balance, of direction, of speed. He also becomes aware of objects around him.

Becoming Aware of Others

The child will discover other people when he moves around. First, because they touch him. They are a part of what he does.



As he does more, he meets more people. He touches them as he moves. They touch back. This is the beginning of social contact for him.

The deaf-blind child must learn how to function as a member of a group. He must learn to accept others. That means touching others as well as being touched.

At first, a child may only be willing to work with you. But gradually, he will learn to work with others; first, with one person, then perhaps two. Slowly you can introduce new people into his group.

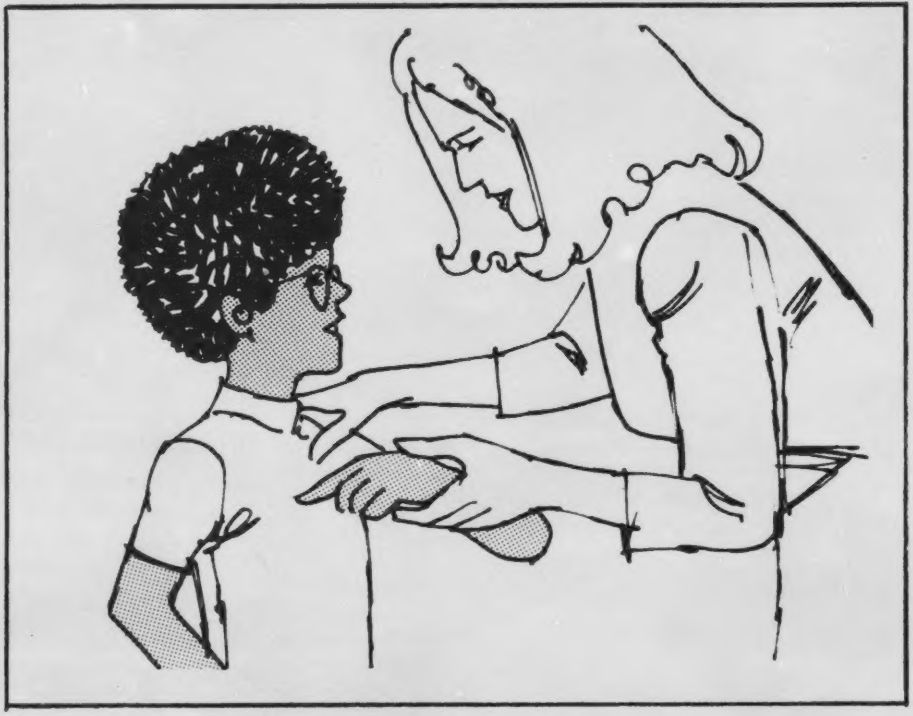
Developing a Relationship

A one-to-one relationship is necessary to begin with because the child needs a lot of physical contact. Remember, touch forms the basis of all he learns and knows. The child must develop tolerance, trust and pleasure in this contact with you before he will begin to accept others into his life.

This initial one-to-one relationship also means that you can give the child more attention and more help. Without this, activities may end in frustration for both of you.

Without help, the child might pull away, become inattentive, or angry. When this happens, no learning is going to occur. Working directly with one child means you can keep him actively involved. The more active the child is, the more valuable and enjoyable the activity is for him.

Arranging time for activities is not as difficult as it may seem. You are not going to have much time to spend alone with each child. You have all the children to care for at one time. But this does not mean you cannot spend some time with each child. A brief activity can do a lot. A few seconds or a few minutes can be a valuable learning time.



As you pass each child, you can take his hand and make his name sign. Say something nice, something anyone would like to hear. Tell him you like the color of his shirt, or mention how nice his hair looks today. Give him a quick hug or a pat on the back. You are approving of him as a person.

Names are important. Use them. Help the child learn to make and to know his own name sign. Then help him to learn yours. If you are doing an activity with more than one child, use each of their names. You want the children to learn that everyone has a name.

Developing the Child's Self-Image

Using the child's name helps him develop a self-image. He learns this is "Me." Your job is to make sure the feelings he has about himself and his name are good.

Each time you use his name, you show you care. Praise him when you use his name. Let him know you care about the way he looks. Praise him for the ways he acts. Use his name each time you praise him.

Help him keep neat and clean. This will help others to want to be near him. Your concern and your care will make him feel that he is a special person.

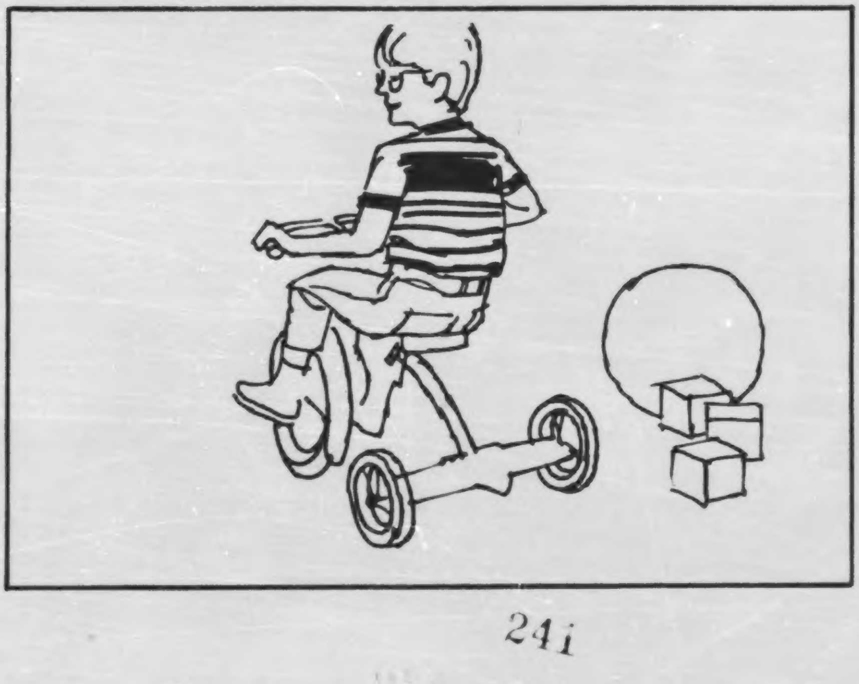
Having a child close to you physically makes communication easier. The child can feel the vibration of your voice. He can feel your breath as you speak. He is close enough to feel and see your signs. And you are close enough to help him sign.

Always speak and sign before any activity. Natural gestures may work best. Specific signs are listed in alphabetical order beginning on page 261.

Make sure the child understands you and that you understand him. Communication is difficult and problems are to be expected. Rely on your natural courtesy, consideration, and common sense.

Respect for others is based on simple courtesy. Be courteous to the children you care for. When you approach them, let them know by touch or sign that you are near. Use words and signs to tell them what you are doing. Be sure to let them know when you are leaving.

Safety and protection of the child must come first in considering the use of any activity or equipment. There are many times when deaf-blind children will have free play time. This may be indoors or out. In either place, all play structures and equipment must be supervised.



Effort has been made to recommend low cost equipment that can be obtained easily. In some cases, you can make it or salvage it for nothing.

Activities for Free Time

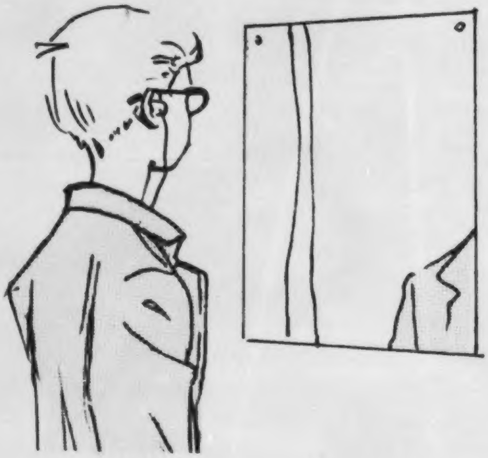
The purpose of the following section is to suggest activities for the children to use in free-time periods. Most of these activities can be used with a minimum of supervision. Activities will help you to develop the child's self-image and encourage socialization.

Learning for Fun

Deaf-blind children cannot sit passively and be entertained by what they see and hear. They must learn to use their other senses. This means they must become aware of their bodies. They need to know how to act alone and with other people. Once they have learned these things, they will be able to participate in recreational and social activities.

Using a Dress-Up Corner to Increase Self-Awareness

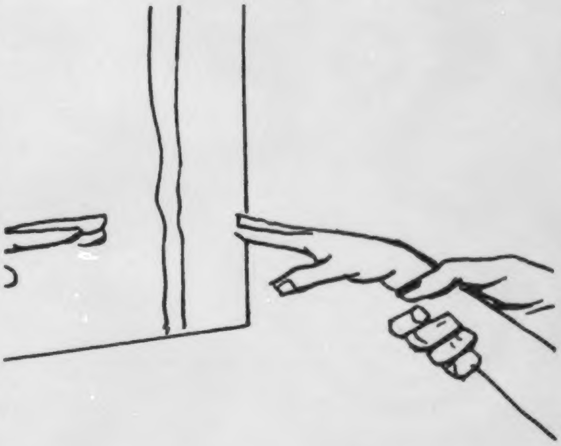
1. Mount an unbreakable metal mirror on the wall and surround with hats, shoes, gloves, vests, shirts. Use clothing of many sizes so the child will develop a sense of his own size.



2. With your hands over his, help the child pick up a piece of clothing and put it on. Talk about it. Tell him it is too big or too small. Talk about the color and feel of it. Help him turn around so he can look at himself in different ways.

3. Another way to use the mirror is making faces. This helps draw the child's attention to your face. It develops his concentration and visual ability.

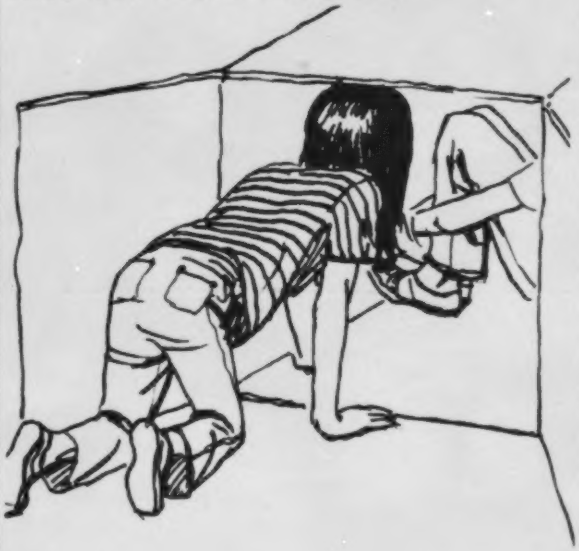
4. When the child is used to looking in the mirror, try using it with movements. Encourage him to imitate you. Wave, and help him wave. Raise your hand and then help him raise his. Try any movement that interests him.



Touching Others to Increase Self-Awareness

1. Place a socio-bowl on the floor. Help several children into it.

2. Place a large cardboard box on the floor. Help several children crawl into it.



3. Inflate a small air or water mattress. Place it on a large floor pad for safety. Help several children onto it. As they wobble and bounce, they can't help but touch and be aware of others.

4. Help several children sit inside the same tire.

Using Limited Space to Teach Self-Awareness

1. Take a large sheet and, standing next to the child, cover yourselves with the sheet. After the child is used to this, stand apart and cover the child alone with the sheet.

2. Try covering a group of children with the sheet. Make it fun.

Developing Balance

1. Place rug squares in a path for the child to walk on. These can be of the same texture to begin with, but add different kinds and thicknesses as the child becomes more skillful.

2. Take a large rug, 6'x8' or 8'x12'. Place pillows, rolls of newspaper, old clothes, or even old tires underneath to create an uneven surface. Help the child walk through, around and over this.

3. Semi-inflate a waterbed, or use an old mattress. Help the child crawl or walk across it.

4. Create a texture walk outside. Use sand, grass, cement, asphalt and rough concrete.

Building Body Awareness

1. Draw a series of outlines on the wall in different sizes. Let the child measure up. Make the outline rough so the child with little or no vision can feel it.

2. Place different textures at different heights around the wall. Use self-adhesive rug pieces. Cut them into decorative shapes. Place them very high, very low, and in places that the child can reach and touch.

Games for Developing Awareness of Others

1. Start with one child. Hold hands facing each other. Circle around singing:

"Ring around the rosey,
Pocket full of poseys,"

2. On the second verse,

"Ashes, Ashes,
All fall down."

stop circling, and squat down.

3. Now add one more child at a time and do it as a group.

Circle Games for Children

1. Start with just one child. Hold hands, facing each other. Walk in a circle.

2. Make the circle get wider and wider until you can just hold on. Make it closer and closer until you are toe to toe.

3. Circle around and lift your hands up. Now circle around and let your hands down.

4. Add another child to the group and do this with two children and then three and so on.

Variations on the Circle Game

1. When the children can play the circle game, try putting one child in the middle while you play. When you move in close enough to touch each other, he replaces someone in the circle and they go inside.

2. Another way of introducing new people to the circle is to walk around the outside of the circle with them. When they touch someone, that person goes outside and walks around. The first child joins the circle.

Teaching Children to Play London Bridges

1. Start with two children holding their hands up to make an arch.

2. Guide a third child through the arch as you sing:

"London bridge is falling down,
falling down."

3. On the line, "My fair lady," have the children drop their arms and catch the third child inside. Gradually introduce more children into the game.

Playing "Simon Says" to Develop Body Awareness

1. Sit facing the child. Say SIMON SAYS, TOUCH YOUR NOSE, or ear, or some body part. Now touch that part of your body.

2. Help the child touch the same part of her body. Encourage the child to imitate you.

3. Now try it with a small group of children. Have three or four sit facing you and play the same game.

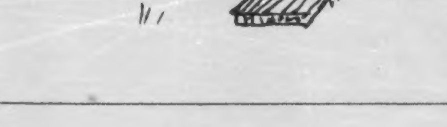
Increasing the Child's Awareness of the World

1. Help him follow a line on the floor. Place your hands on his waist and guide him in a single file. Gradually add more children to the line. Make the line a bright color or texture, that he can see easily or feel with his feet.

2. Help him follow a shape on the floor. Place your hands on his waist and guide him. Add more children gradually. Make the outline of the shape a bright color or texture, that he can see easily or feel with his feet.

3. Cut footprints out of a bright colored or textured material and paste on the floor. Help him step from print to print. Try spacing them differently after he gets used to it.

4. Make stepping stones out of cut-off posts, tires, or large, flat pieces of stone. These can be placed at different heights as well as different spaces. Make sure they are secure and will not wobble when stepped on.



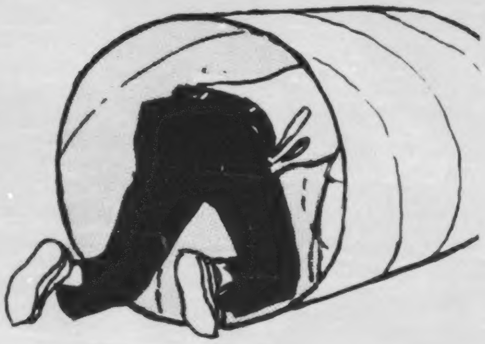
Making an Obstacle Course

1. Make an obstacle course. Guide each child carefully until he has mastered the course. Then encourage him to do it on his own.

2. Start with something the child can crawl under: a table, a chair, a bed.

3. Next have something for him to go over: a box, a small set of stairs, or a vinyl wedge.

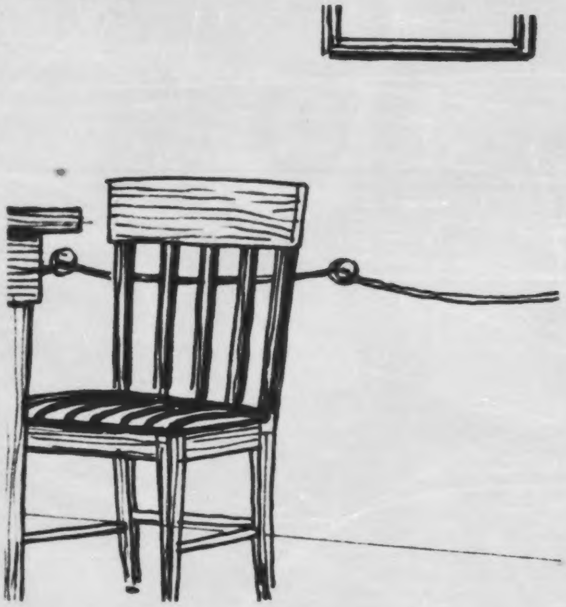
4. He can go through things, too: a cloth tunnel, a cardboard box, a large rubber tube.



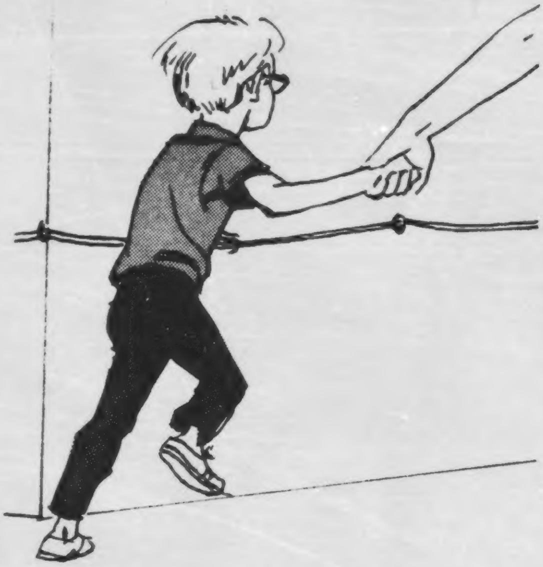
5. Then there are things he can go around: a very large ball, a vinyl cylinder or socio-bowl, or even a large chair.

Improving Body Movements

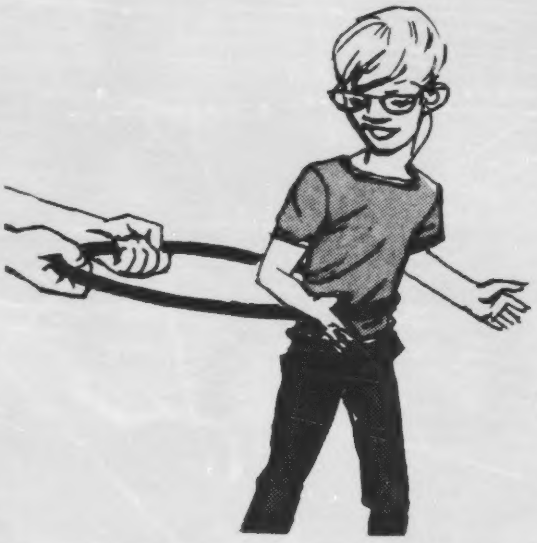
1. Place guide ropes at waist height along the walls of the room.



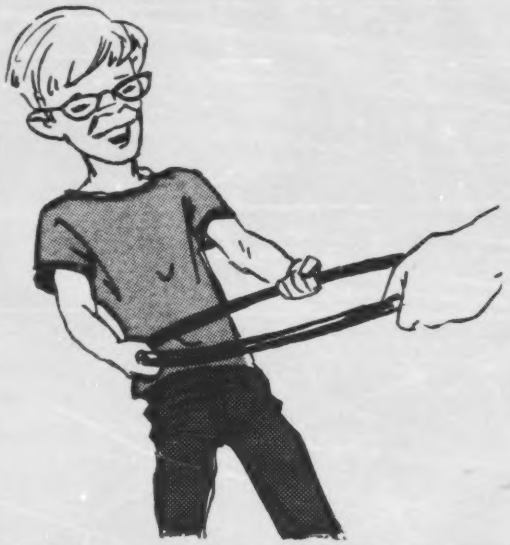
2. Place guide ropes at waist height along walls in hall and help him run.



3. Place a hoola-hoop around the child and guide him around. Encourage the child to hold on.



4. Now have the child stand on the outside of the hoop, holding on. Guide him for awhile. Then let him guide you. Take turns.



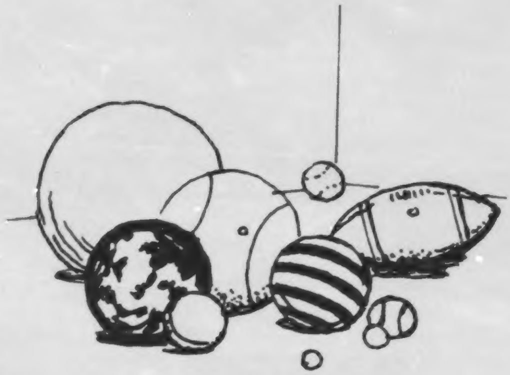
Teaching the Child to Play Ball

1. Stand beside the child. Show him the ball. Let him touch it. Then let the ball roll slowly away.

2. Walk beside the child and help him follow the ball.

3. When you reach the ball, help him pick it up and start again.

4. Use a variety of balls: large, small, of many textures, colors and weights. You may find the child has one he likes best.



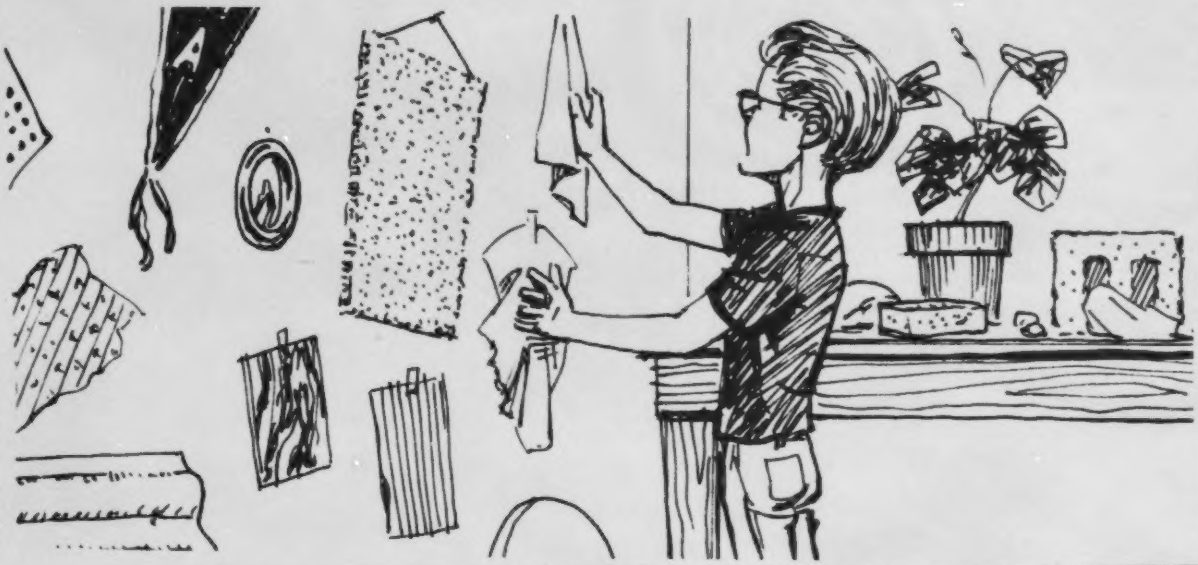
Balls for Group Games, Too

1. Place all the balls in a basket. Stand very close to the children. Slowly dump them out. Let the children pick them up. Collect them and do it again.

2. Sit in a circle on the floor, with bodies touching and pass the ball around.

Exploring New Textures

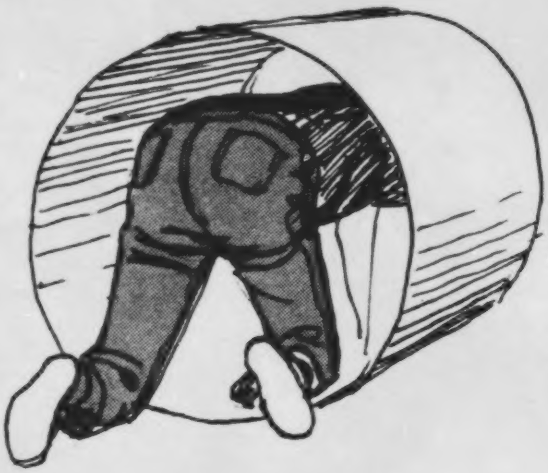
1. Make a texture corner. Line the walls and the floor with various types of textures: rug, cloth, wallpaper, scraps, corrugated cardboard, pieces of heavy plastic. Help the child feel and explore as many of these as he can reach.



2. Make shapes of different textures, colors and sizes for the child to feel. Try circles on the floor and on the walls. Then add squares, and triangles. Ask him to find another one just like the one he felt.

Basic and Safe Equipment for Children

1. Tunnels



2. Stairs

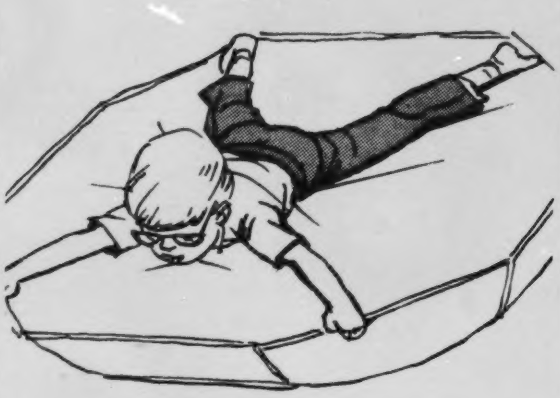
3. Cubes

4. Slides or ramps

Basic and Safe Equipment for Children (cont.)

5. Mats

6. Rocking saucers

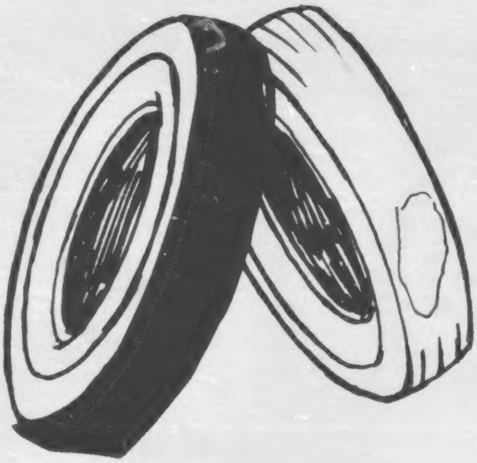


7. Inflated donuts

8. Cylinders and wedges

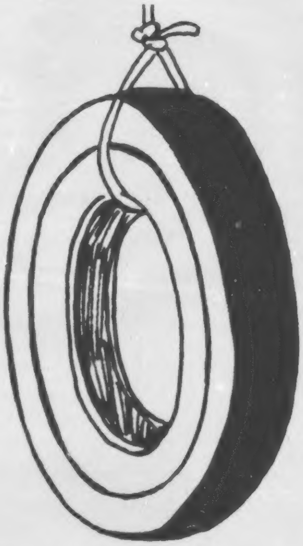
Tires for Good, Cheap Fun

1. Try standing them up.



2. Try laying them flat.

3. Hang one for a swing.



4. Make them into stepping stones.

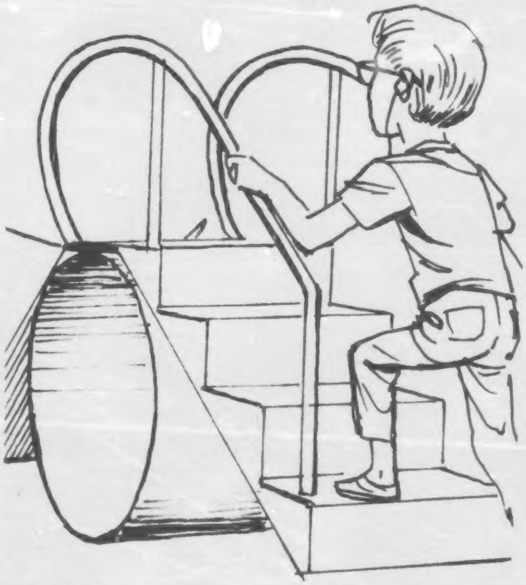
Outdoor Equipment

1. A water and sand table

2. Jungle gym

3. Merry-go-round with tricycles

4. Slides and stairs over a barrel



Part III Introduction to Signs

The signs used in Learning Steps are based on natural gestures or American Sign Language. Each sign is illustrated and described. Directions on how to form a sign may use the same hand positions as the one-hand manual alphabet. A copy of the alphabet is also included.

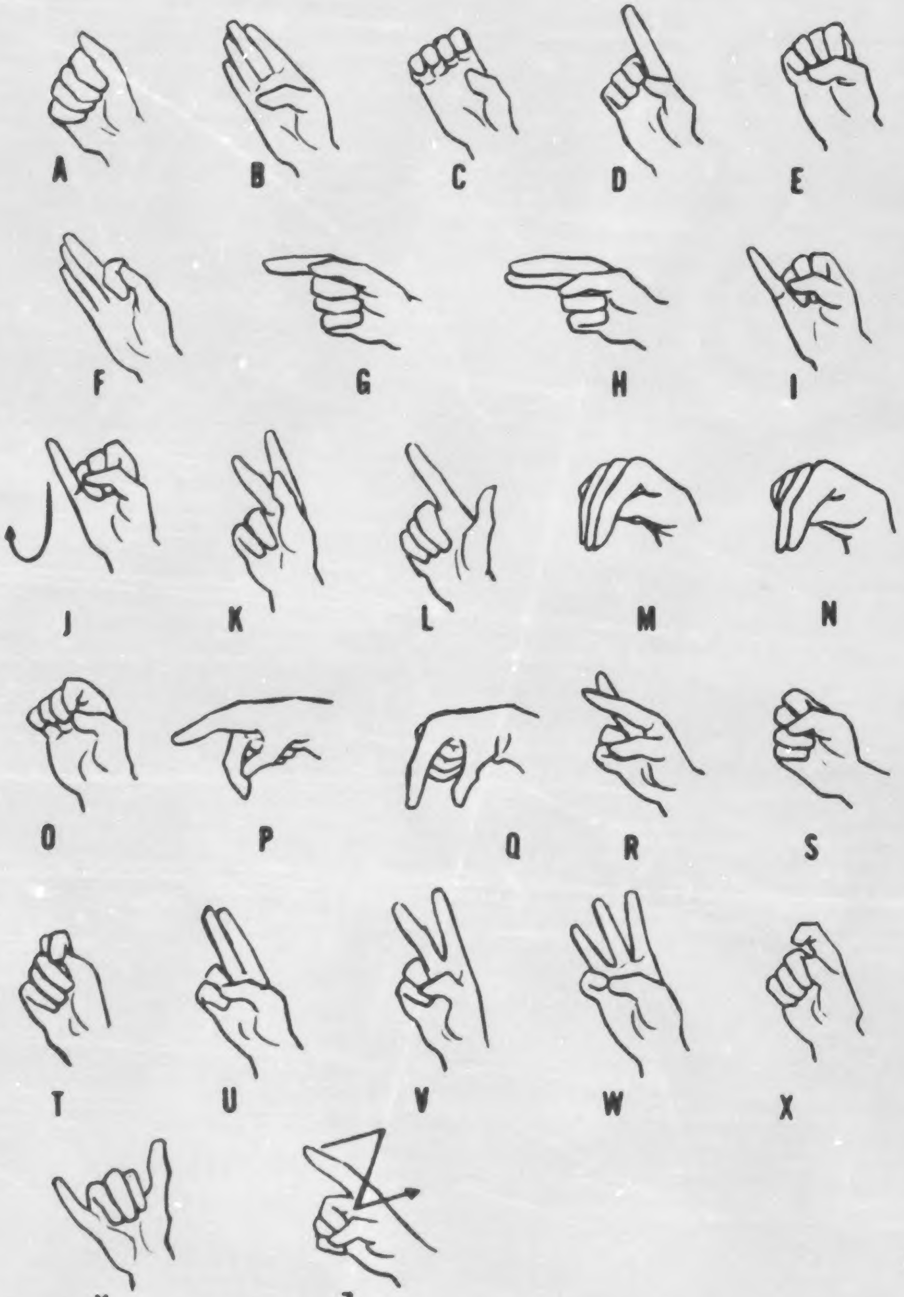
The signs you know and use may differ. If so, continue using the signs you already know. Just make sure that everyone working with the children uses the same signs. If in doubt, check the alphabetical listing of signs that follows.

THE MANUAL ALPHABET

The manual alphabet has many uses:

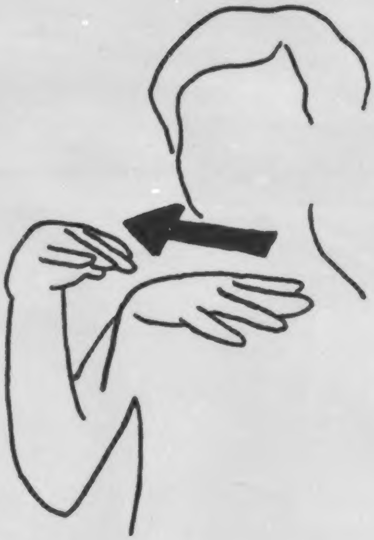
1. Use it to form name signs - yours or the child's - by using the initial letter of each name ("B" for Bobby, "P" for Pam).
2. You will sometimes use the initial letter of a word as a complete sign ("T" for Toilet, "W" for Water).
3. Letters of the alphabet are also used to form the bases of other signs (both "A" hands meet at the waist to form "Buckle Belt").
4. The manual alphabet can also be used to fingerspell words.

Practice this alphabet. Use it to form name signs. Use the initial letter of a word as a sign. Use letters to form bases of other signs.



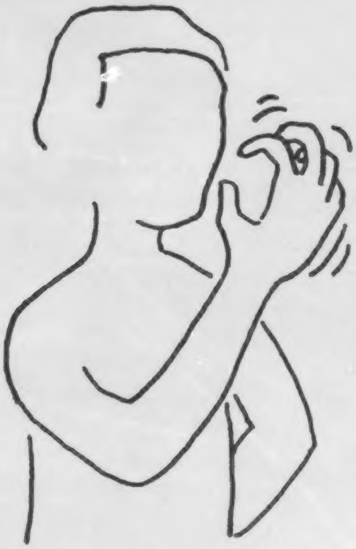
ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF SIGNS

AND



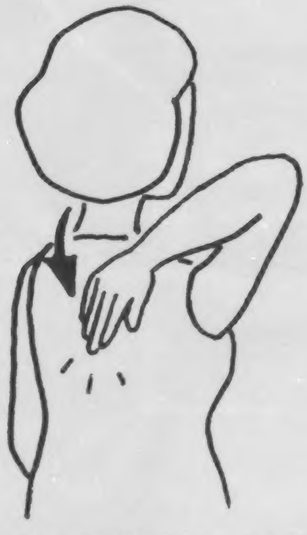
Bunch fingertips as open right hand is drawn toward right.

ANGRY



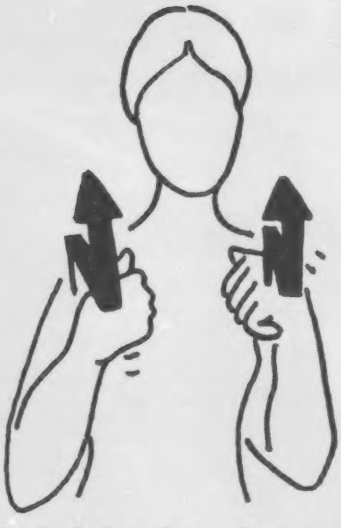
Right hand, curved fingers, sharply draws down across face.

BACK



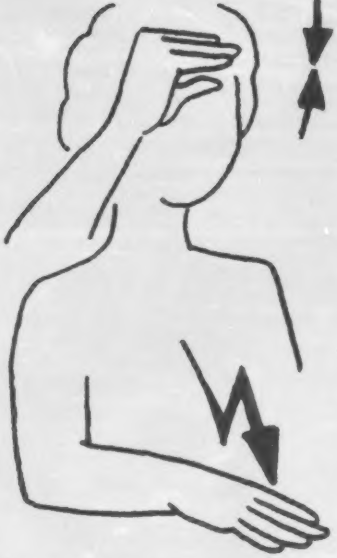
Right hand touches back.

BATH



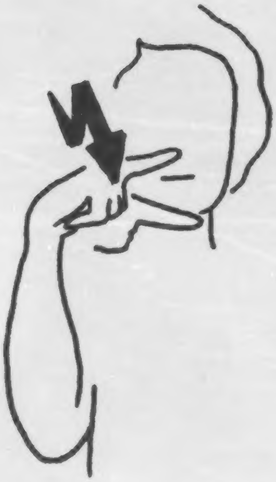
Both "A" hands rub up and down on the chest several times.

BOY



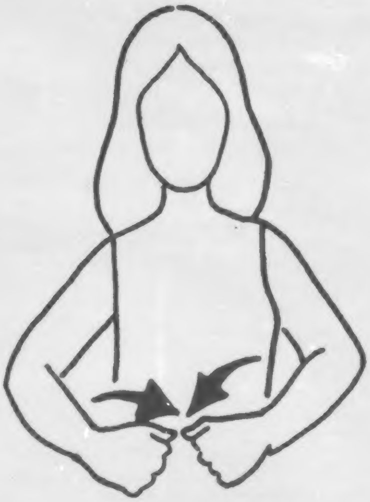
Fingers and thumb meet as if grasping a hat brim. Hand is then brought down to show size of boy.

BRUSH TEETH



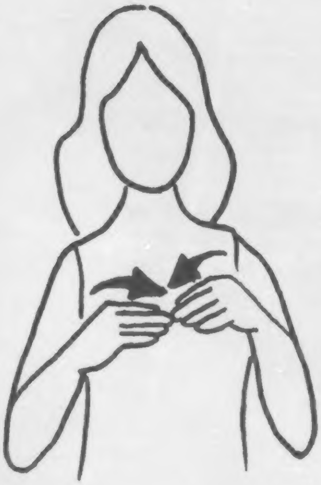
The right index finger moves up and down on the front teeth as if brushing.

BUCKLE BELT



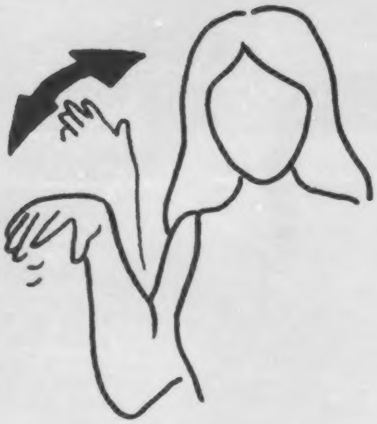
Both "A" hands come together at waist.

BUTTON



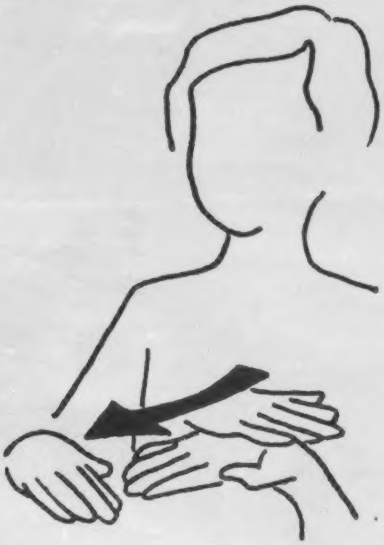
Both hands, fingertips bunched, come together on chest.

BYE-BYE



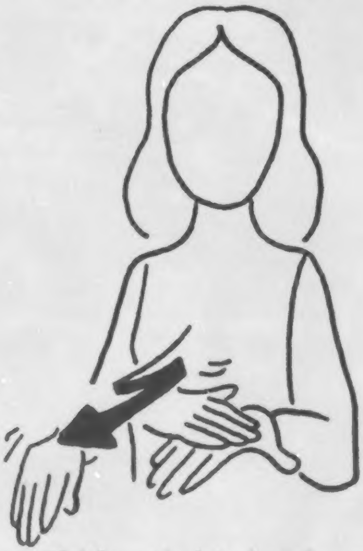
Wave bye-bye.

CLEAN



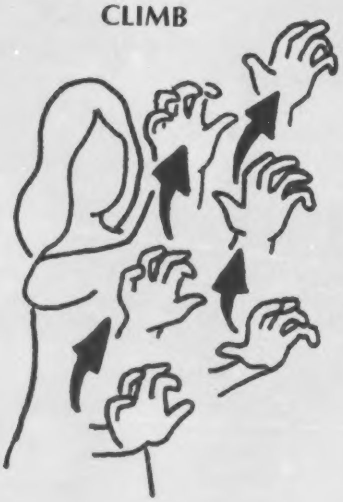
Slide right hand, palm down, across palm of left hand.

CLEAN-UP



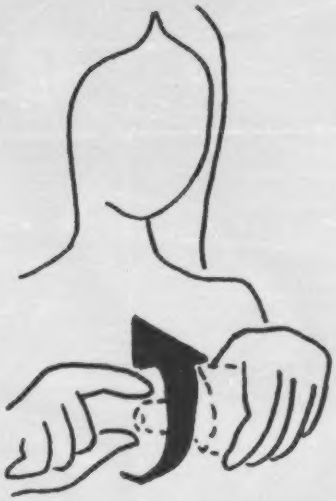
Slide right hand, palm down, across palm of left hand several times.

CLIMB



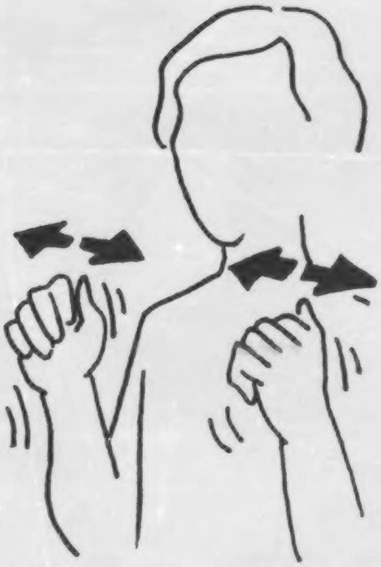
Raise both hands up several times alternately as if climbing.

CLOSE TOOTHPASTE



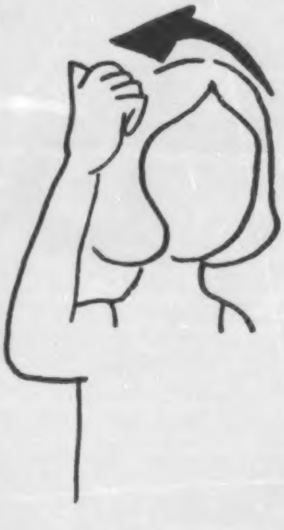
Right index finger and thumb make twisting motion, as if turning cap.

COLD



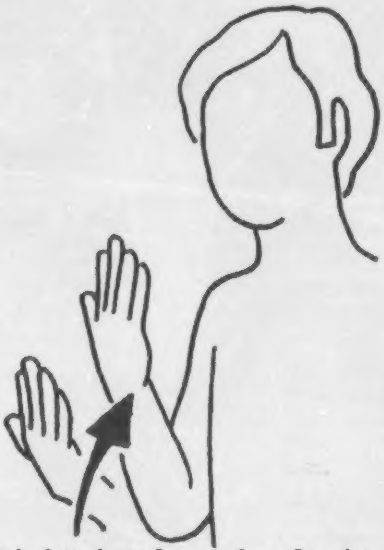
Shake fists, knuckles facing each other, as if shivering.

COMB HAIR



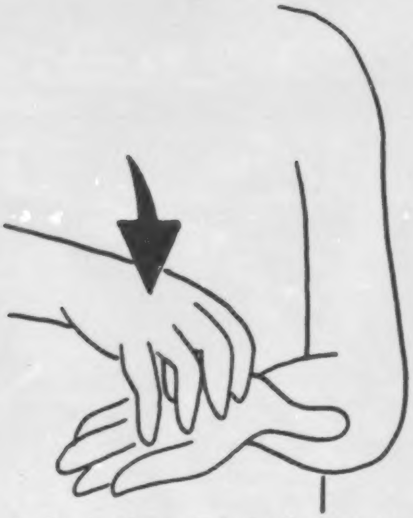
Curve fingers of right hand like a comb and move as if combing hair.

COME



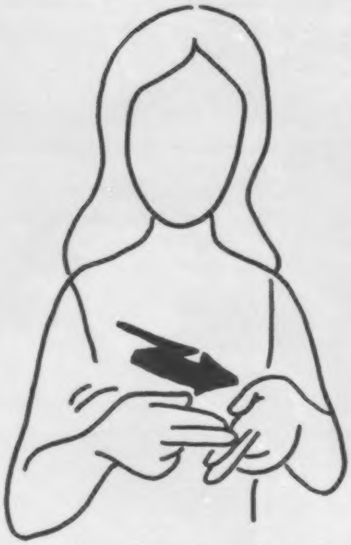
Right hand, palm facing inward, is moved towards self.

COOKIE



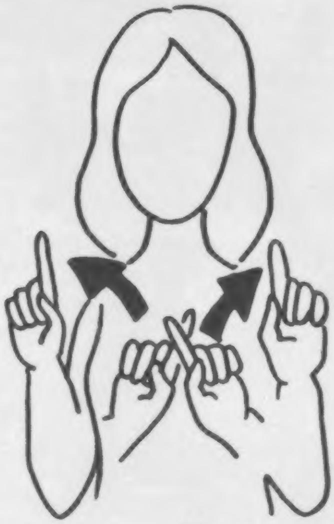
Twist the slightly curved fingers of right hand, in the left palm, as if using a cookie cutter.

CUT (KNIFE)



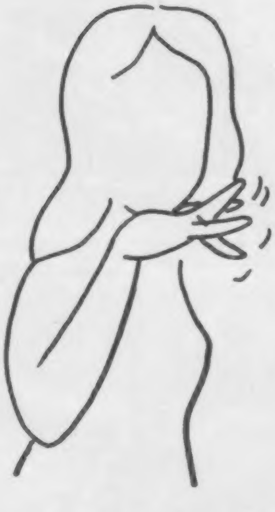
The right "H" hand makes sawing motion across left "H" hand.

DIFFERENT



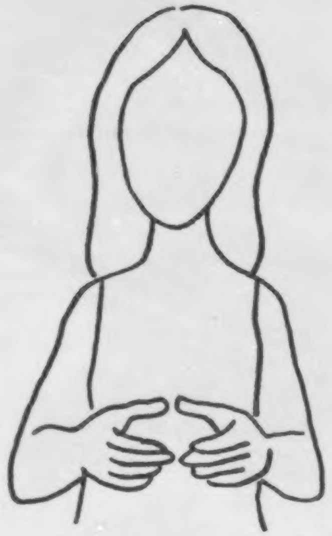
Cross index fingers, palms forward. Pull abruptly apart.

DIRTY



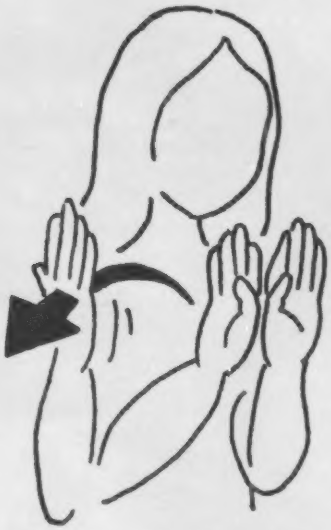
Place right hand, palm down, under chin. Wiggle fingers.

DISH



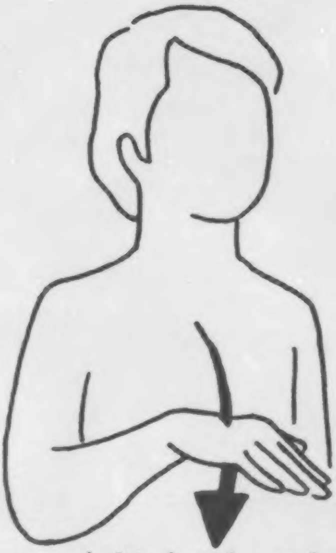
Both "C" hands form shape of dish.

DOOR



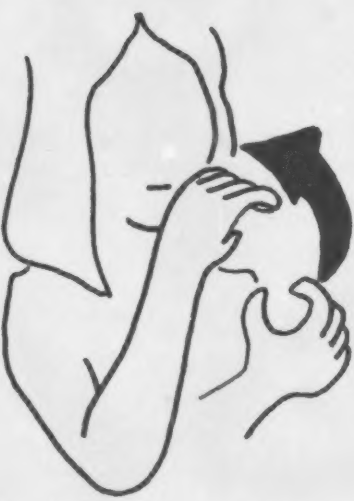
Both "B" hands come together along edges of index fingers. Swing the right hand back and forth as a door opening and closing.

DOWN



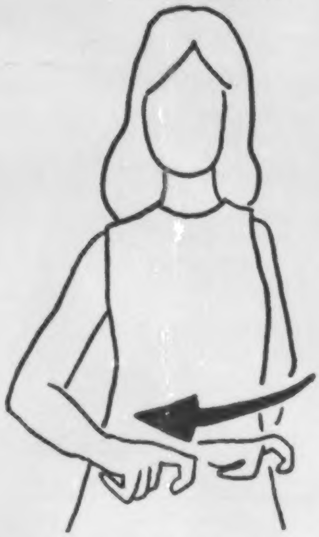
Open right hand, palm down moves downward.

DRINK



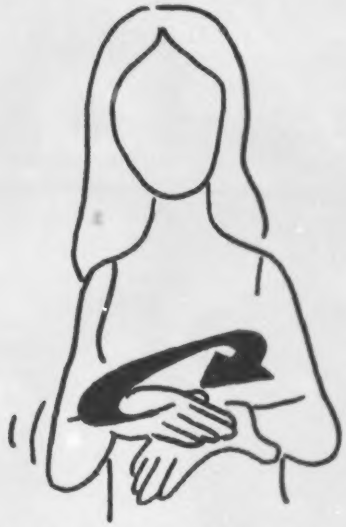
Right "C" hand is tipped up towards the mouth as if drinking.

DRY (PANTS)



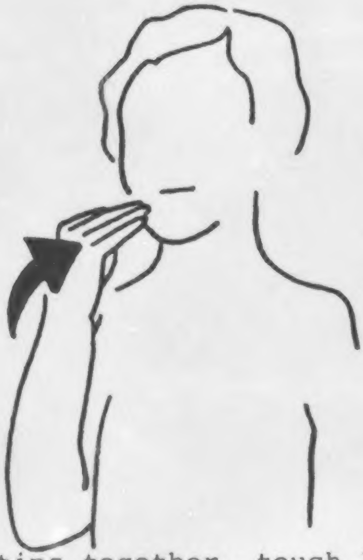
Right "X" hand moves from left to right across crotch.

DRY DISHES



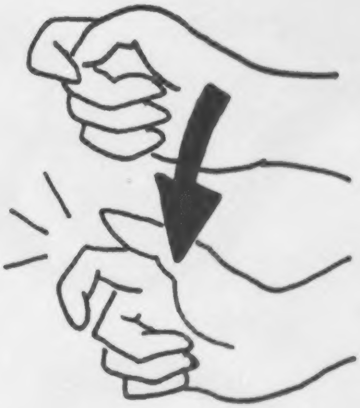
The right palm makes circular motion on left palm.

EAT



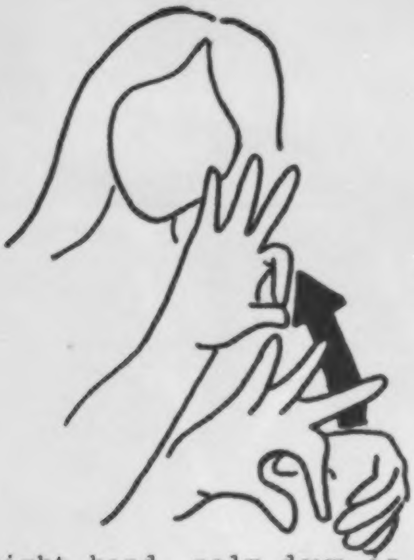
Fingertips together, touch lips several times, in a tapping movement.

FAST



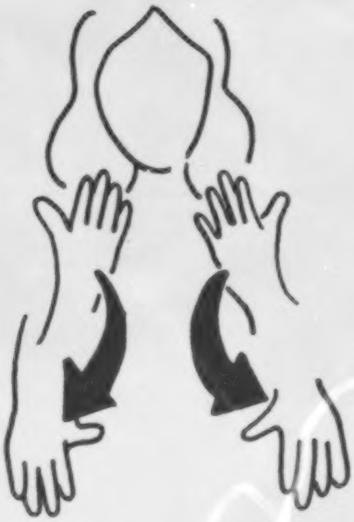
Snap the right thumb out of the curved index finger (like flipping a marble).

FIND



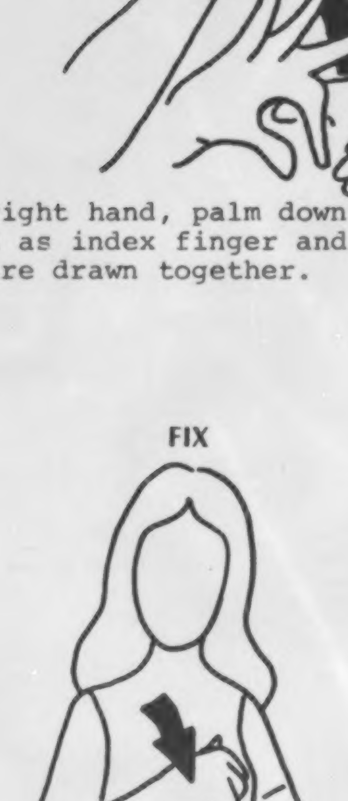
Open right hand, palm down is raised as index finger and thumb tips are drawn together.

FINISHED



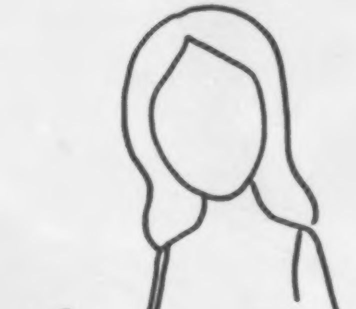
Both hands open, fingers apart, facing each other. Quickly flick hands so palms face down.

FIX



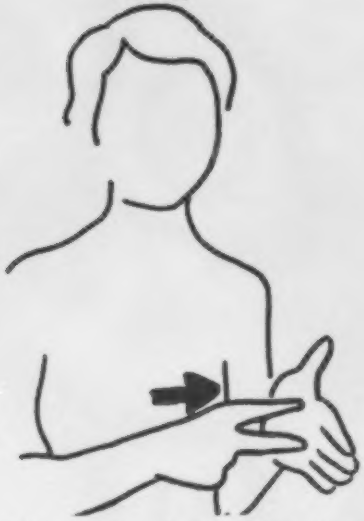
Right "A" hand comes down on left "A" hand repeatedly.

FLUSH TOILET



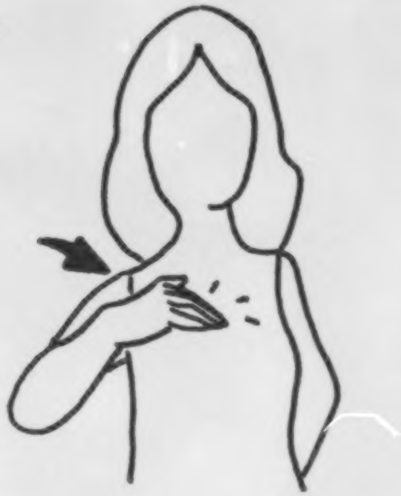
Right "C" hand turns to right, as if pushing handle.

FORK



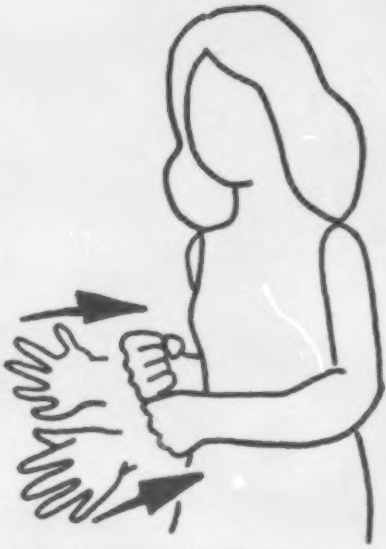
Fingertips of right "V" hand touch palm of left hand. Lift up and down a few times in a stabbing motion.

FRONT



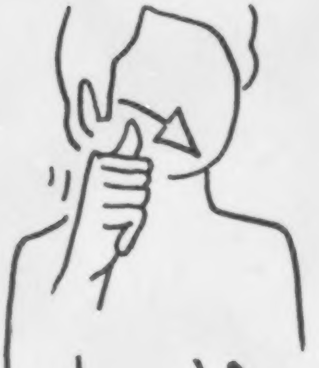
Right hand touches chest.

GET



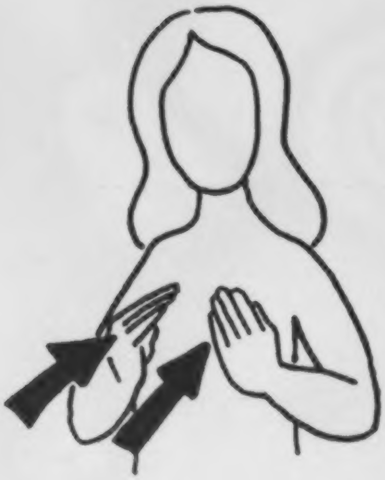
Open hands, make fists, right on top of left.

GIRL



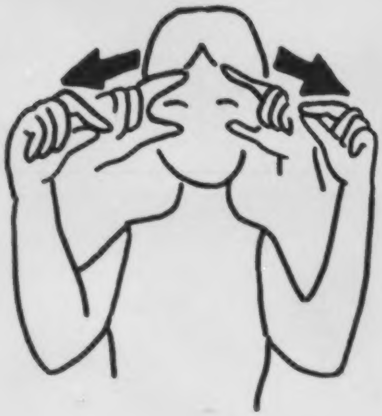
Move right "A" hand along jaw to chin. Hand then moves down to show size of girl.

GIVE (ME)



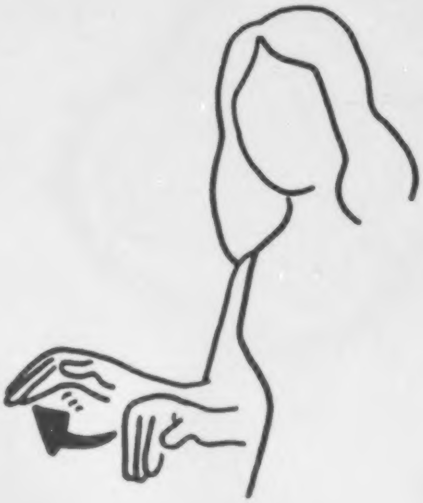
Draw outstretched hands, palms up, toward self.

GLASSES



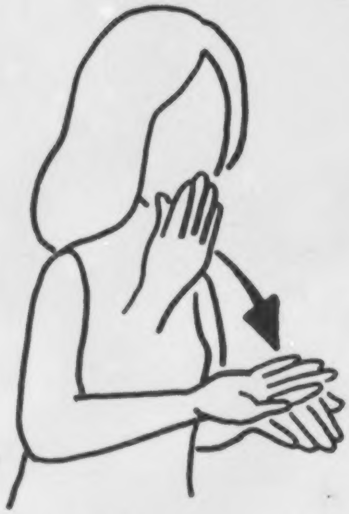
Draw index fingers and thumbs sideways from bridge of nose as if outlining glasses.

GO



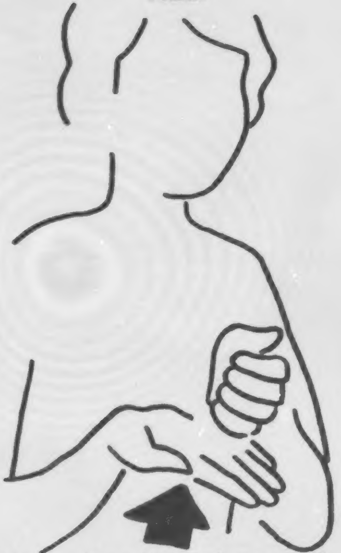
Hold right hand palm down with fingers bent. Flip the fingers up several times.

GOOD



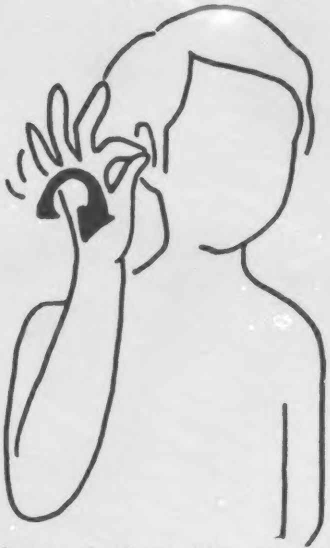
The right hand touches mouth and moves down, palm up, into the left open palm. (A pat on the back is also acceptable.)

HELP



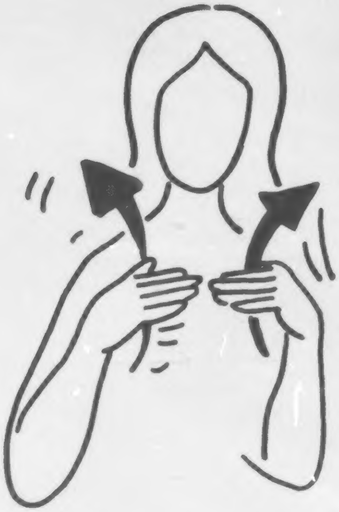
Right open hand under and supporting the left "S" hand. Lift both hands together.

HEARING AID



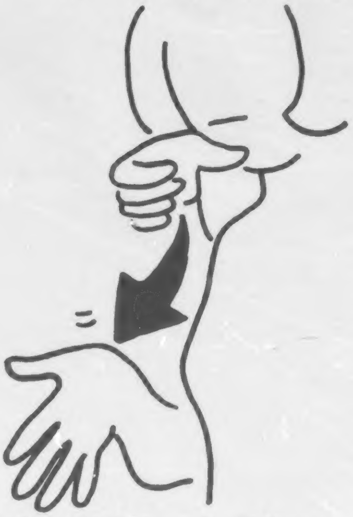
Right index finger and thumb make twisting motion at ear.

HAPPY



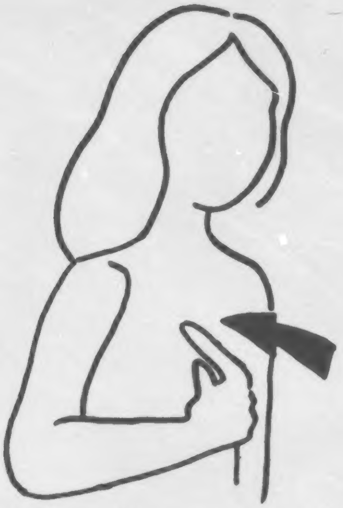
The open hands make quick upward strokes on chest several times.

HOT (FOOD OR WATER)



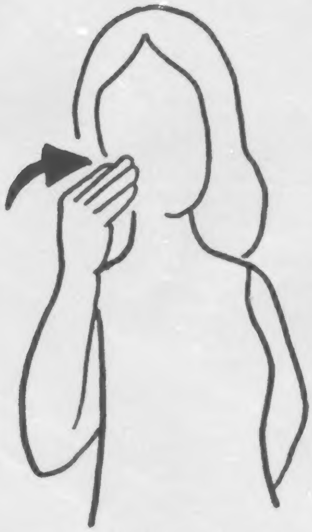
Right "C" hand flips away from mouth as if tasting something hot.

I



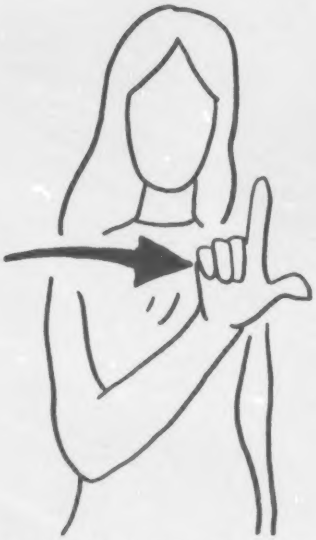
Right index finger points to chest.

KISS



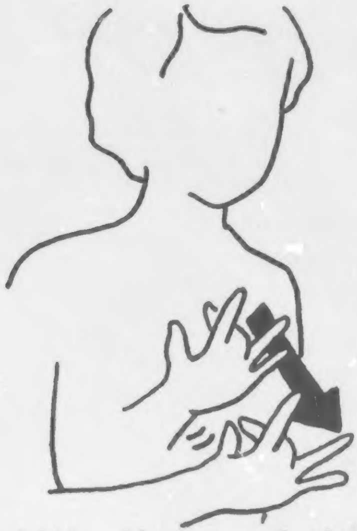
Bunch the tips of the fingers of right hand. Place them on the corner of the mouth, then on the cheek.

LEFT



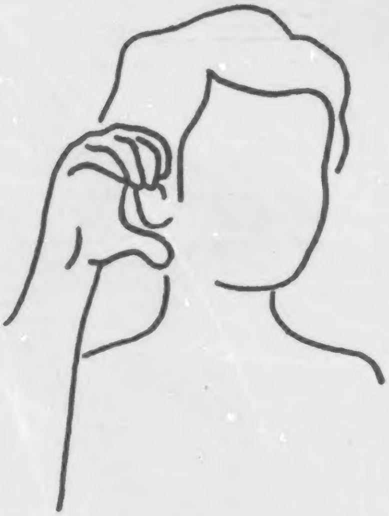
Right "L" hand moves towards left.

LIKE



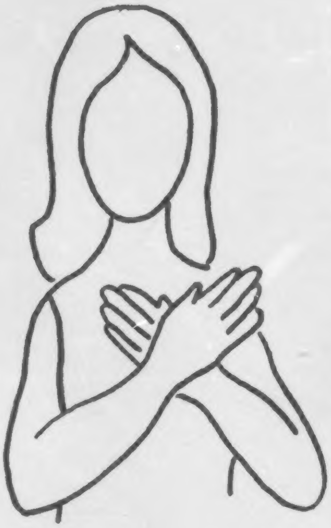
The middle finger and thumb touching chest are drawn together as they move outward.

LISTEN



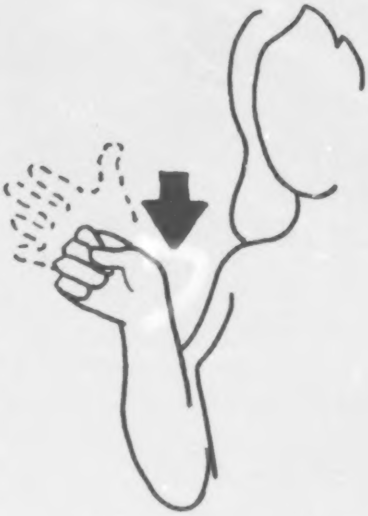
Right "C" hand is cupped around right ear.

LOVE



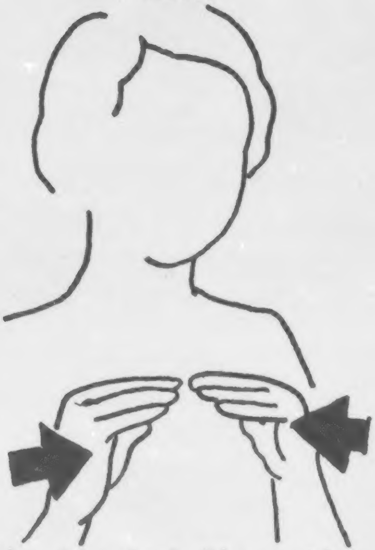
Open hands are crossed on top of one another and placed over heart.

MILK



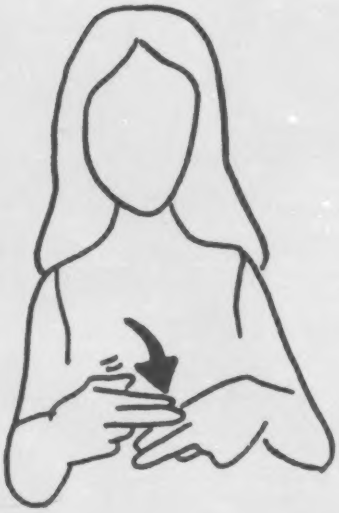
Make a fist with right hand. Squeeze it several times as if milking a cow.

MORE



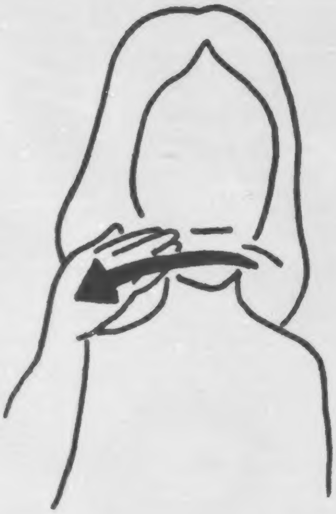
Bring the bunched fingertips of both hands together. Tap together a few times.

NAME



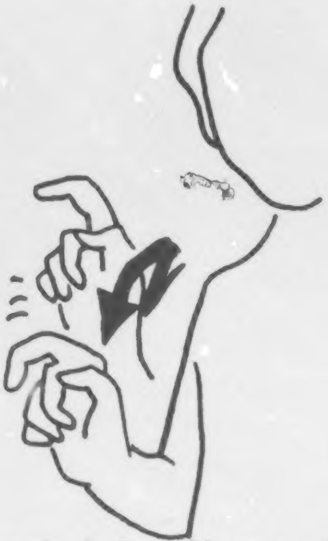
The right "H" hand is across the left "H" hand.

NAPKIN



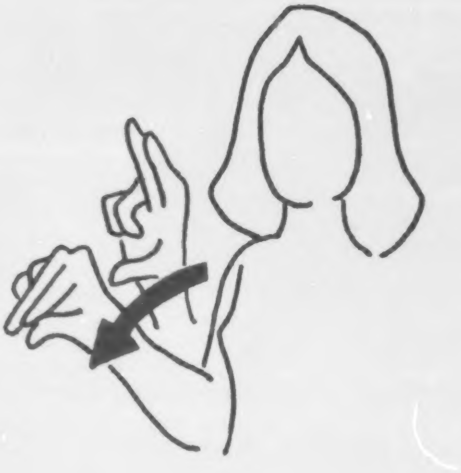
Right open hand, palm in, wipes across mouth.

NEED



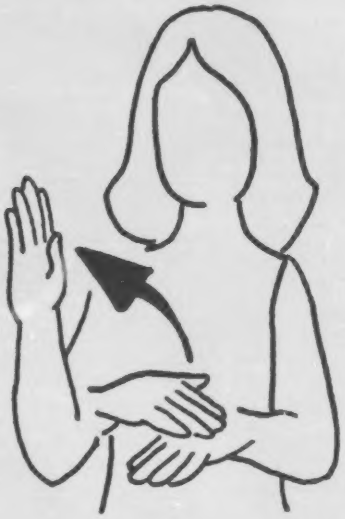
Crook index finger of right hand. Move it downwards quickly.

NO



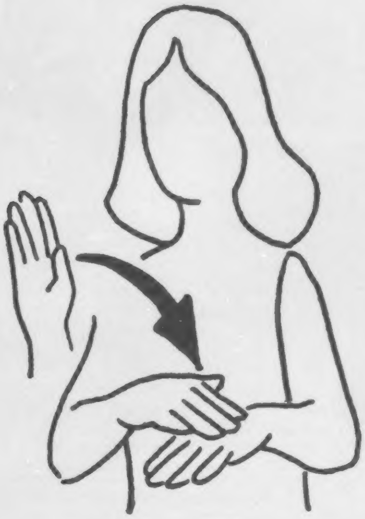
Index finger of right hand and middle finger snap down quickly on thumb.

OFF



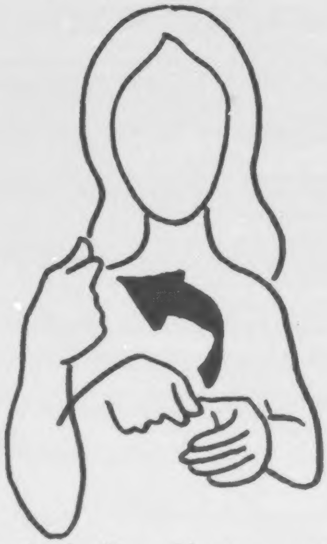
The right hand turns, lifts palm up from the "On" position, reversing the "On" motion.

ON



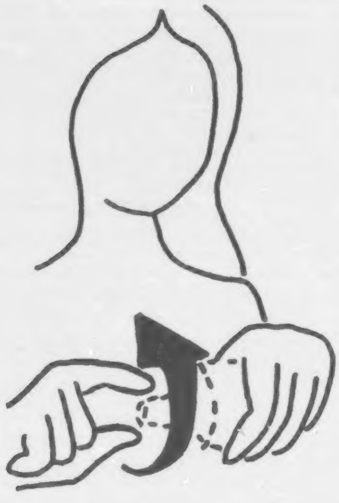
Right hand moves across and rests on top of the back of the left hand.

OPEN (LID)



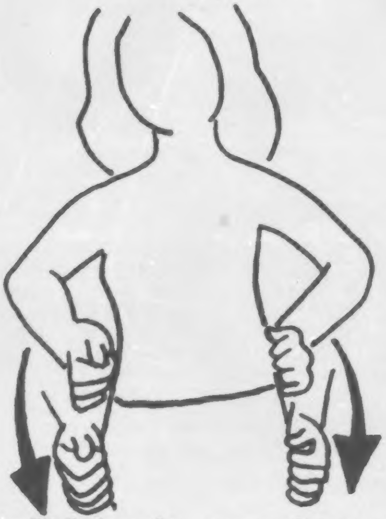
Bunch index finger and thumb of right hand. Make lifting motion on top of left "C" hand, as if tearing off cover from box.

OPEN (TOOTHPASTE)



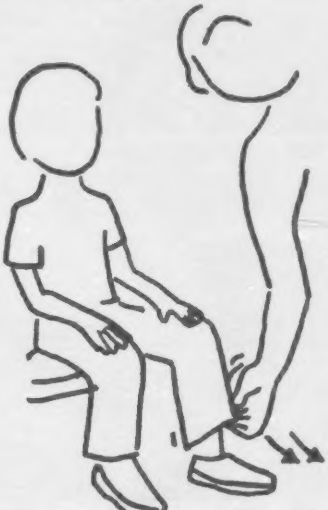
Right index finger and thumb make twisting motion, as if turning cap.

PANTS DOWN



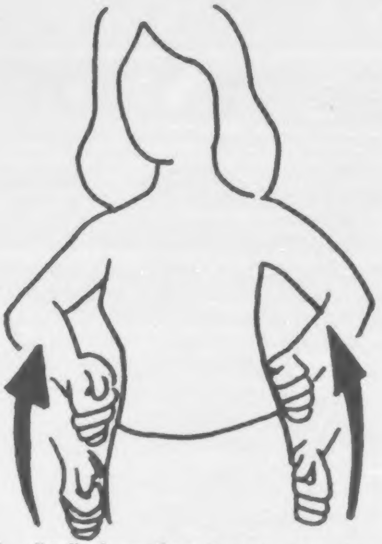
Both "A" hands move down along outside of legs, as if pushing down pants.

PANTS OFF



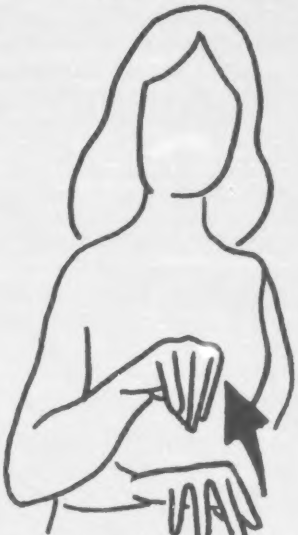
Tug at edge of pants cuff, as if pulling pants off.

PANTS UP



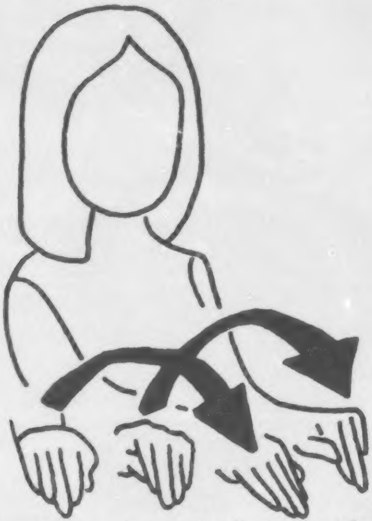
Both "A" hands move up on outside of legs, as if pulling up pants.

PICK (IT) UP



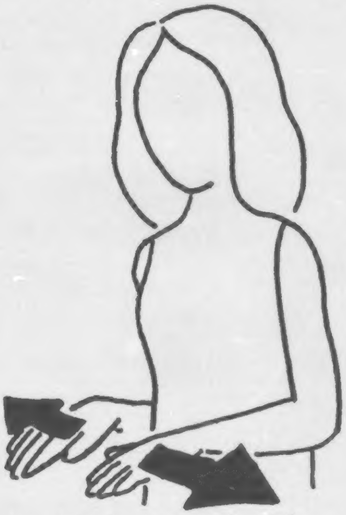
Reach toward something with outstretched fingers, then bunch fingertips as hand is drawn back.

PLACE (PUT)



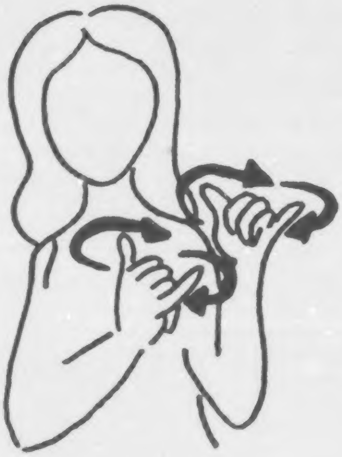
Fingertips bunched together, arch hands forward.

PLACEMAT (TABLECLOTH)



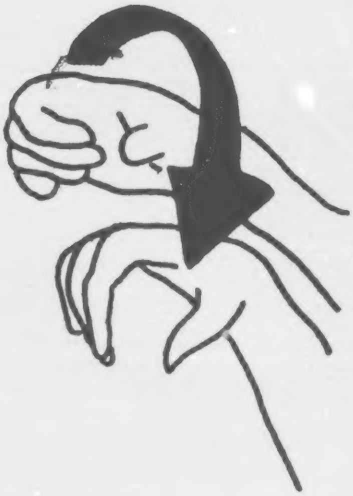
Place both open hands, palms down, side by side. Then draw them apart.

PLAY



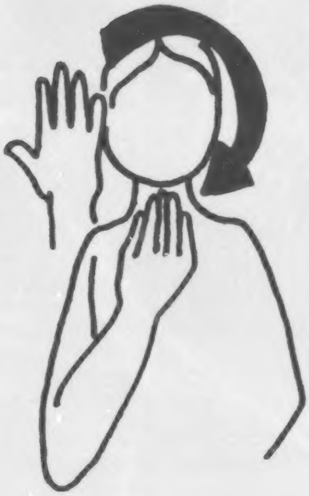
Shake the "Y" hands in and out in front of you several times.

POUR



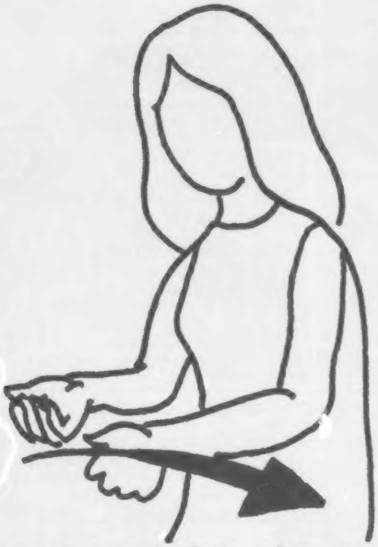
Right "C" hand tips towards the left in pouring motion.

PRETTY



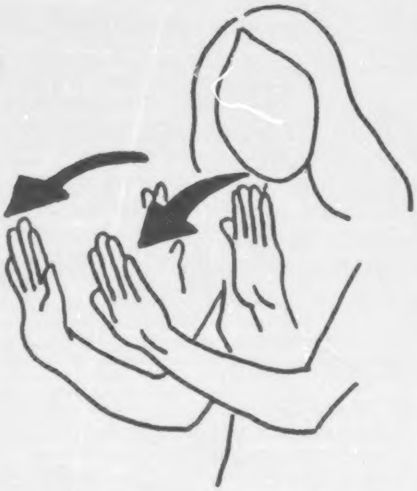
Move open hand in a circle in front of face. Close fingers at chin.

PULL



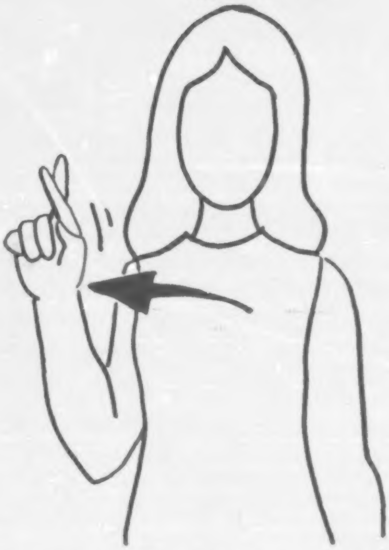
Move both "A" hands towards self, as if pulling on a rope.

PUSH



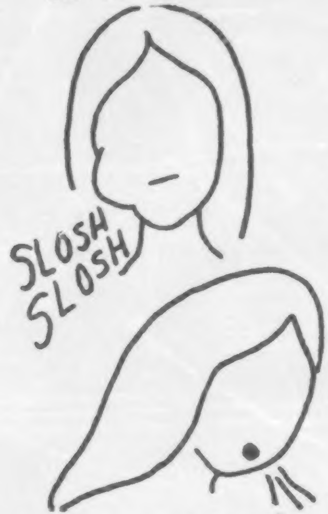
Move both hands forward, palms open (as in pushing motion).

RIGHT



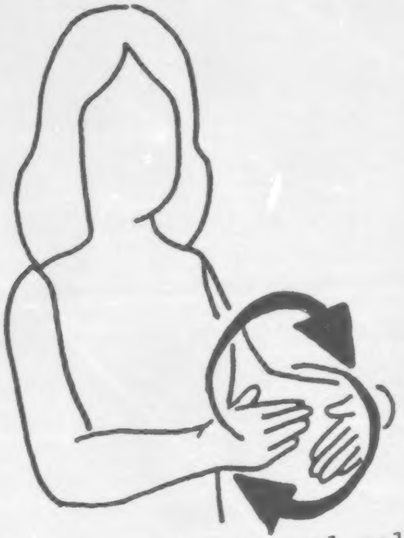
Right "R" hand moves towards right.

RINSE (MOUTH)



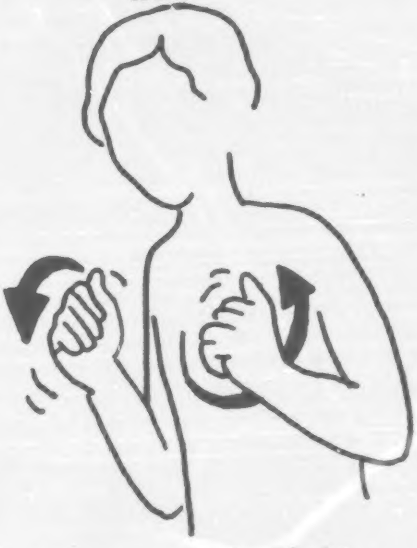
Puff cheeks alternately, then blow out from mouth, as if spitting. (Child must feel your face.)

ROLL OVER



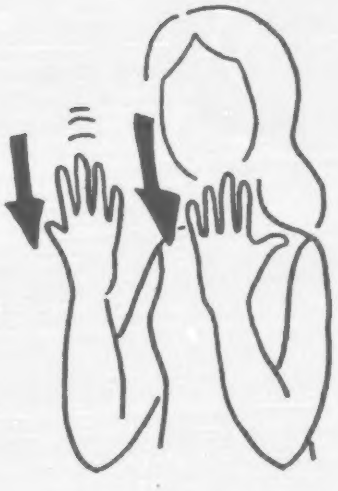
Hands open, palms toward self, rotate around each other, going away from body.

RUN



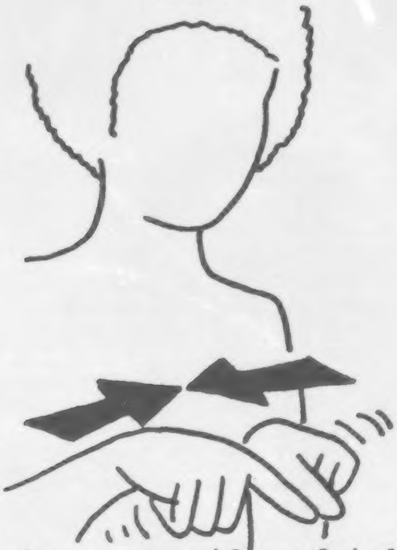
Bend both arms with fists facing, rotate arms as if running.

SAD



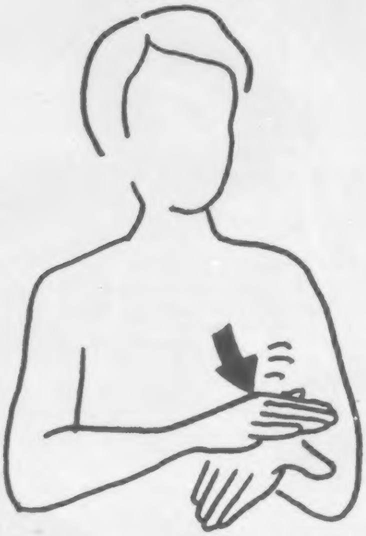
Bend head slightly as both hands with fingers pointed up are drawn down the face a little like falling tears.

SAME



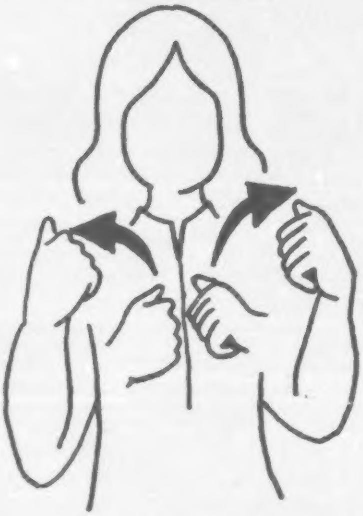
Palms down, tap sides of index fingers together.

SCHOOL



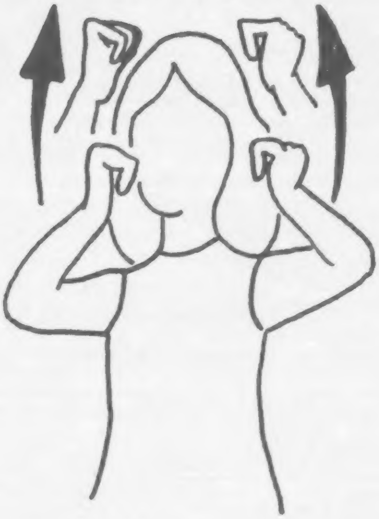
Clap hands twice with left palm up.

SHIRT OFF
(OPEN FRONT)



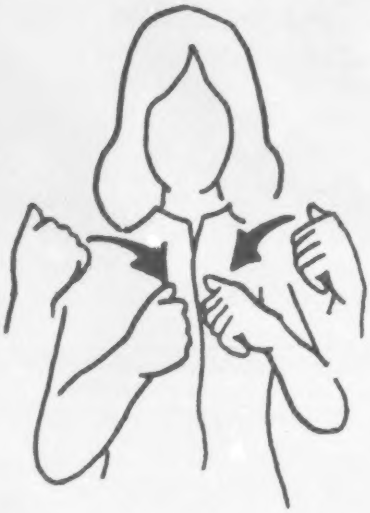
Both "A" hands face chest. Pull apart.

SHIRT OFF
(OVER HEAD)



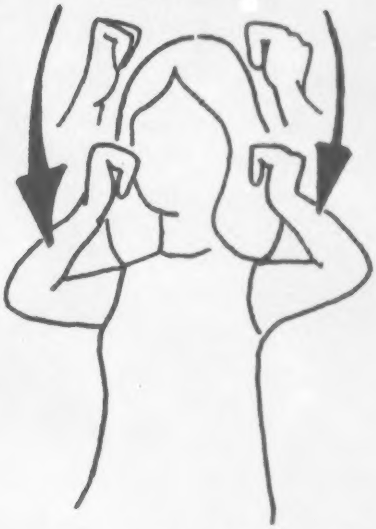
Both "A" hands move up on each side of head.

SHIRT ON (OPEN FRONT)



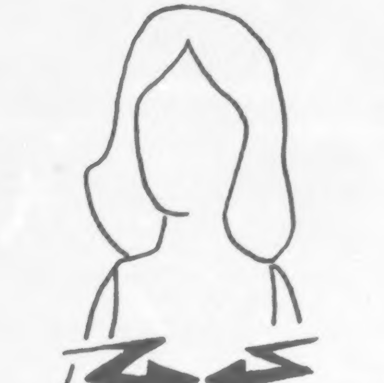
Move both "A" hands from shoulders to chest, palms facing inwards.

SHIRT ON (OVER HEAD)



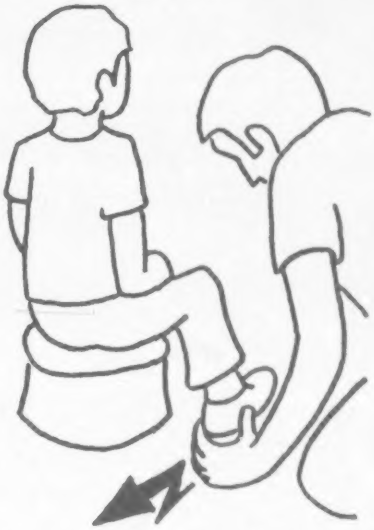
Both "A" hands move down on each side of head.

SHOE



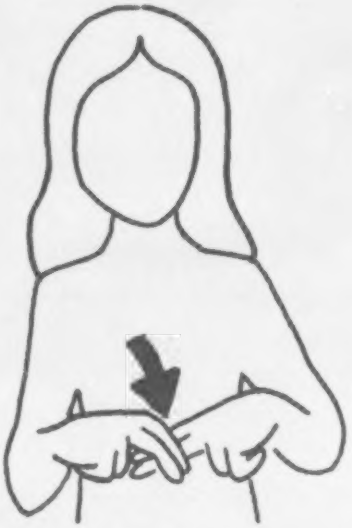
Strike sides of "S" hands together several times, palm down.

SHOE OFF



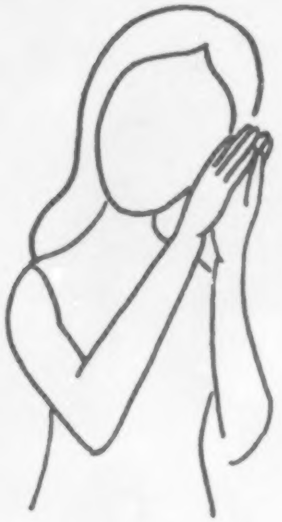
Tug at shoe, as if taking off.

SIT DOWN



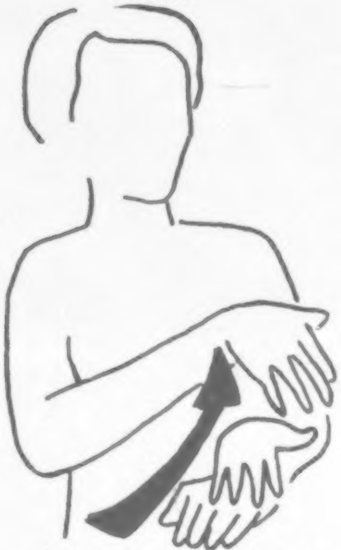
Slightly curve the index and middle fingers of both hands. Cross fingers with right hand on top of left, palms down.

SLEEP



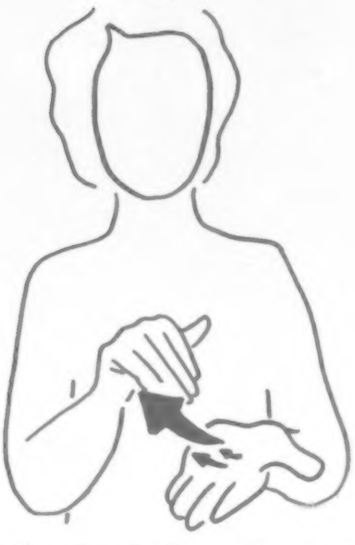
Place both hands against the the right cheek. Tilt head slightly to the right as if laying it on a pillow.

SLOW



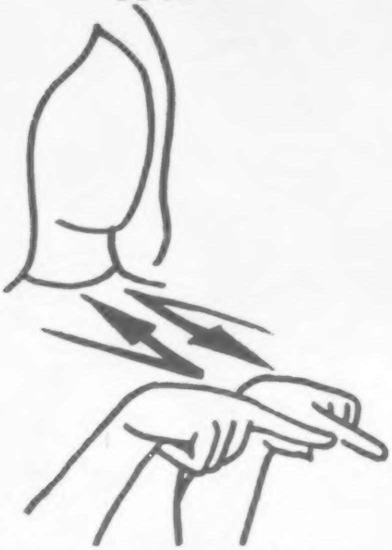
With the right hand, slowly stroke up the back of the left hand.

SOAP



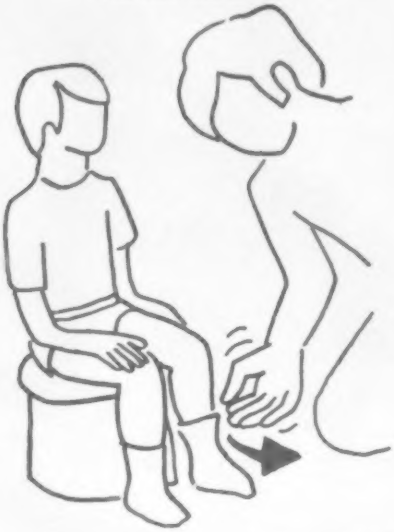
Scratch the left palm several times with the fingertips of the right hand.

SOCK



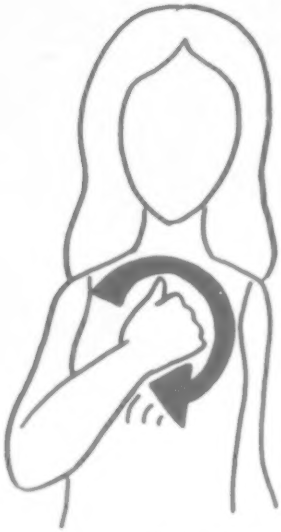
With palms down, rub index fingers up and down several times.

SOCK OFF



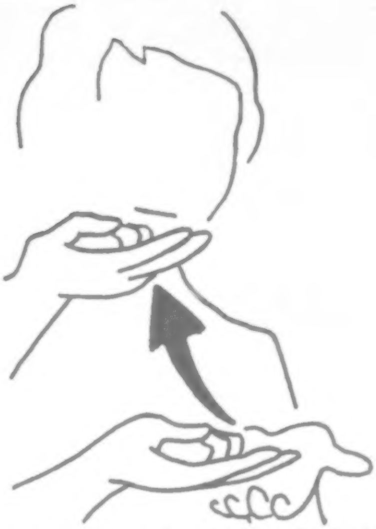
Tug at cuff of sock, as if taking off.

SORRY



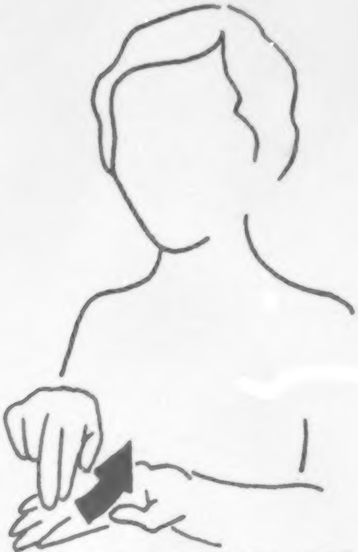
The "A" hand moves in a circular motion to the left on the chest.

SPOON



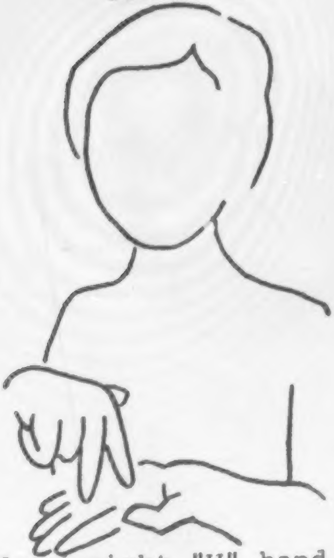
Fingertips of right "H" hand touch palm of left hand. Lift up and down in a scooping motion.

SPREAD



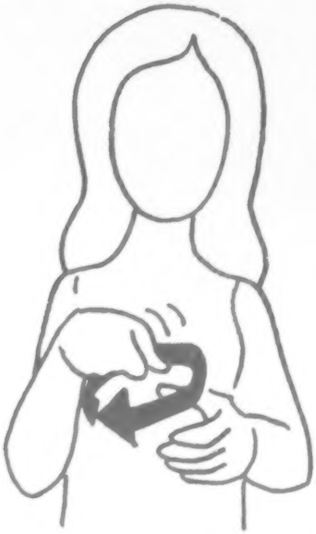
Fingertips of right "H" hand wipe across left palm several times.

STAND UP



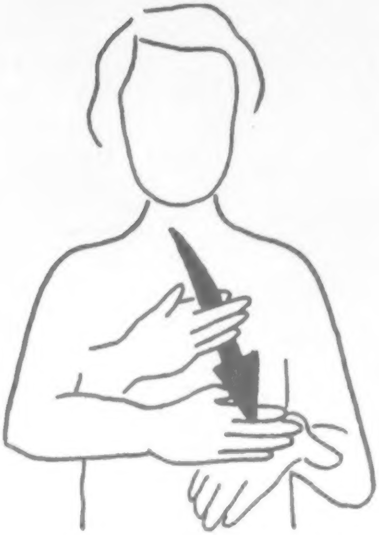
Place right "V" hand in a standing position on the open left palm.

STIR



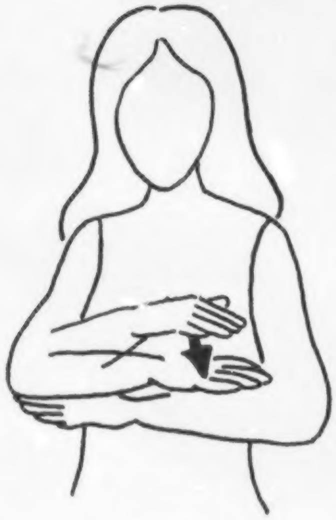
Right "A" hand makes circular motions over left "C" hand.

STOP



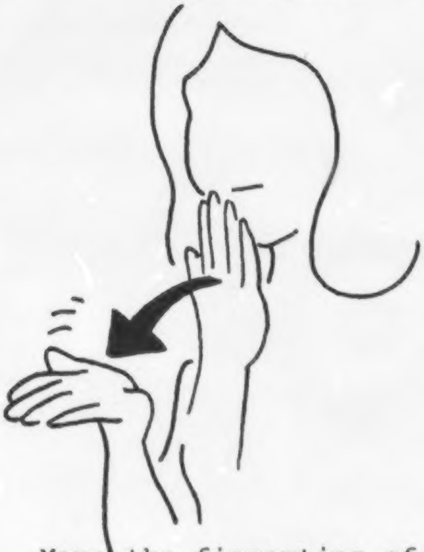
Hit little finger edge of right hand against open palm of left hand in a chopping motion.

TABLE



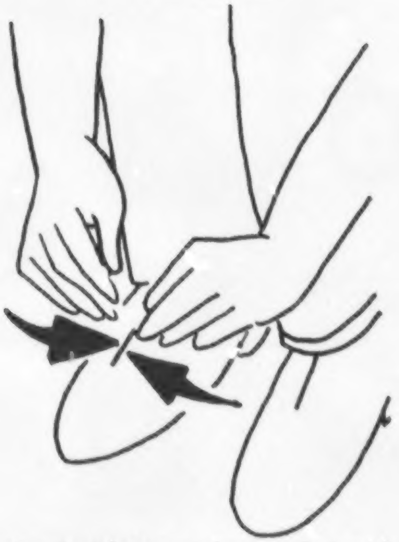
With palms down, right arm taps left forearm.

THANK YOU



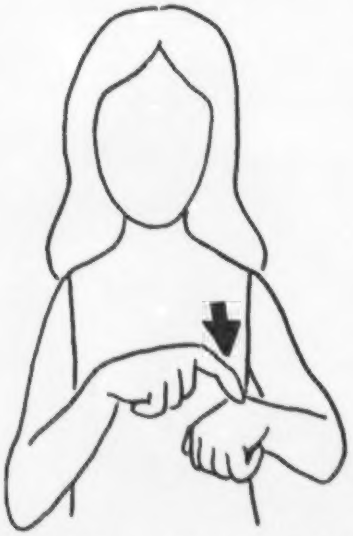
Move the fingertips of the right open hand forward away from the mouth, like throwing a kiss.

TIE SHOE



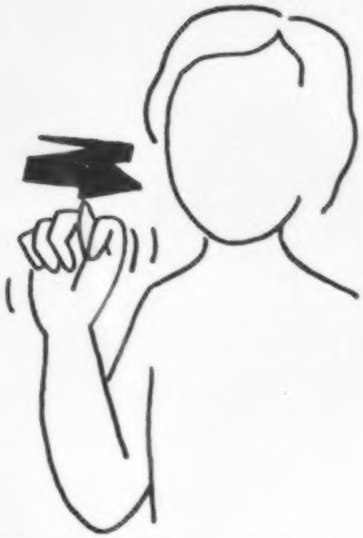
Bunched fingertips of both hands meet on top of shoe.

TIME



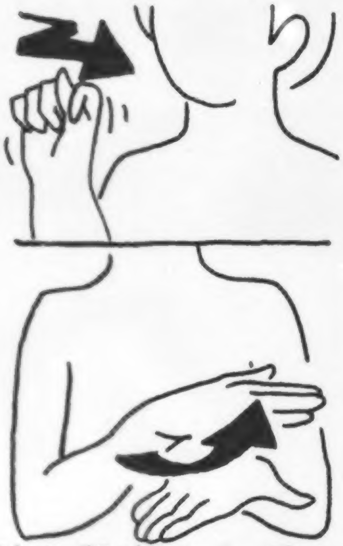
Right index finger points to back of left wrist as if pointing to wristwatch.

TOILET



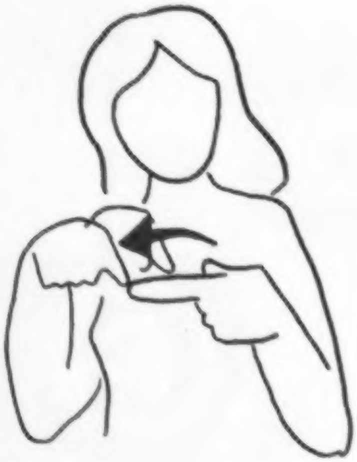
Right hand in "T" sign wiggles back and forth.

TOILET PAPER



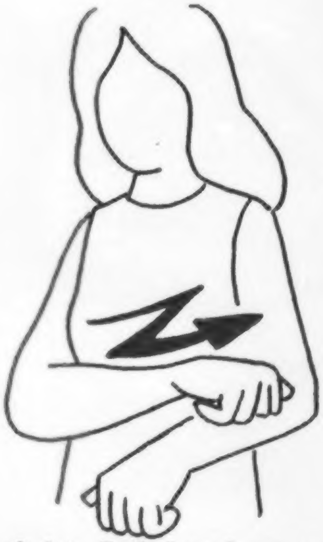
Sign "Toilet." Then right hand brushes across open palm of left towards self. Keep fingers closed.

TOOTHPASTE



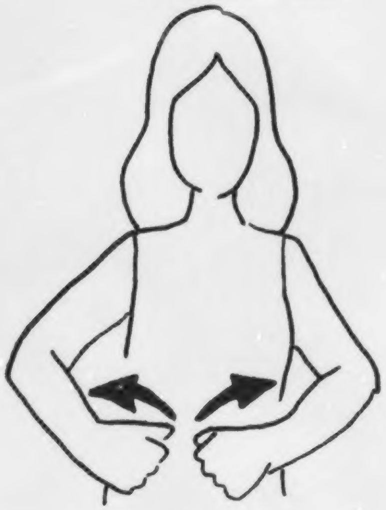
Thumb of right "A" hand draws across left index finger.

TOWEL



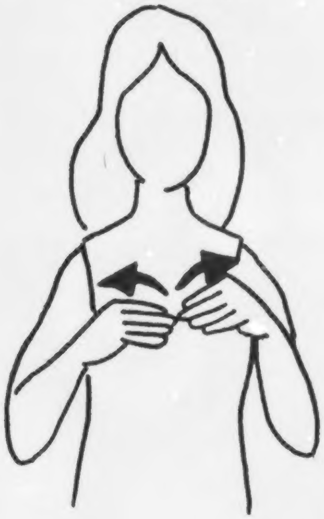
Rub right "A" hand up and down on left arm.

UNBUCKLE BELT



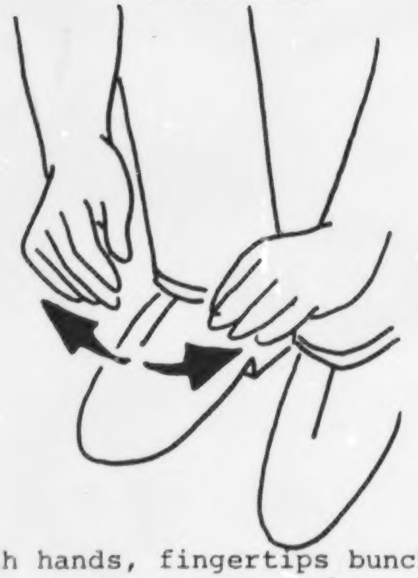
Both "A" hands, facing self, move apart from waist.

UNBUTTON



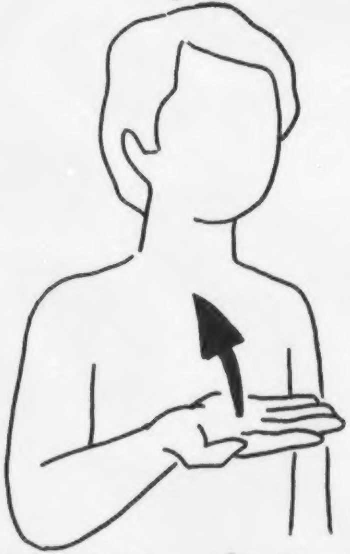
Both hands, fingertips bunched, move apart from center of chest.

UNTIE SHOE



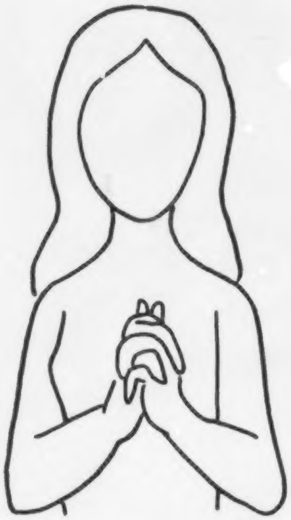
Both hands, fingertips bunched, move apart on top of shoe.

UP



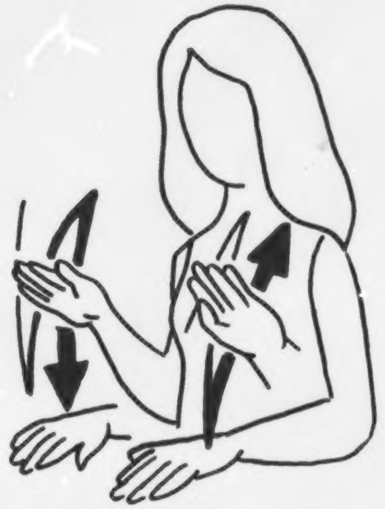
Right hand, palm up, makes upward movement.

WAIT



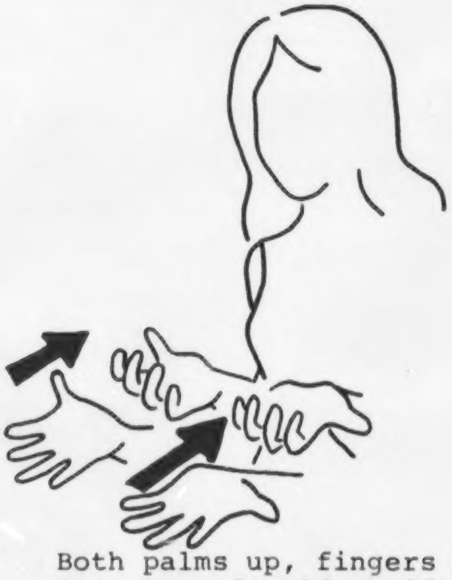
Fold hands to show patience.

WALK



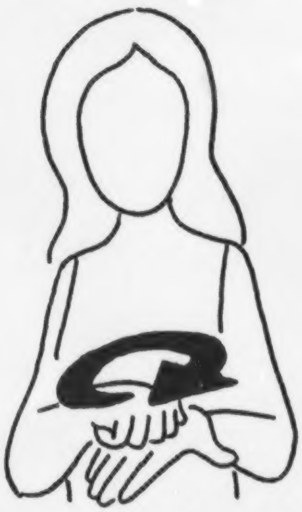
Hands "walking" forward.

WANT



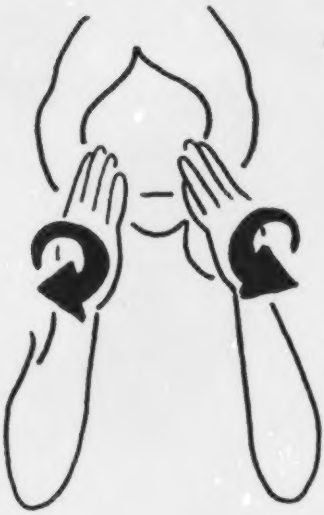
Both palms up, fingers bent. Draw toward self as if opening a drawer.

WASH DISHES



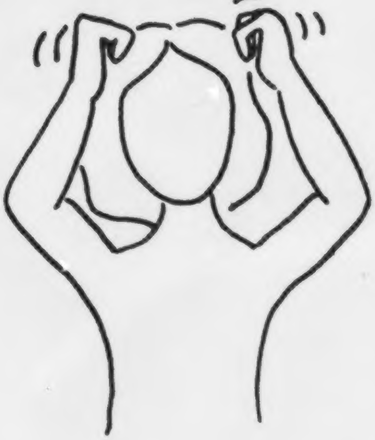
Right "A" hand makes circular motion to the right, on left open palm.

WASH FACE



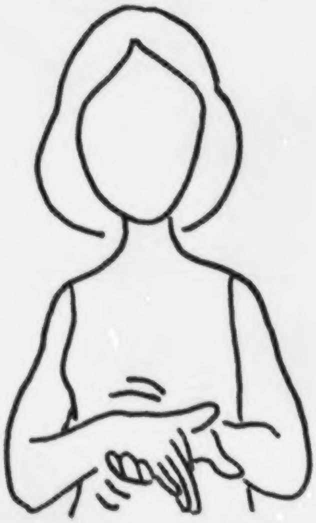
Both hands open, fingers together, make circular motions on cheeks.

WASH HAIR



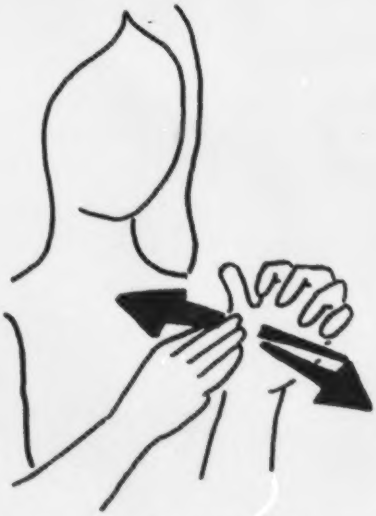
Both "A" hands move up and down several times on sides of head.

WASH HANDS



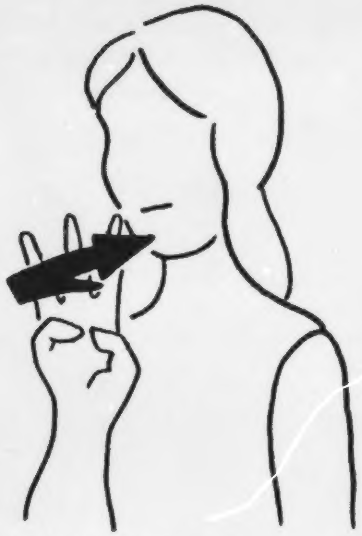
Rub hands together as if washing.

WASH NAILS



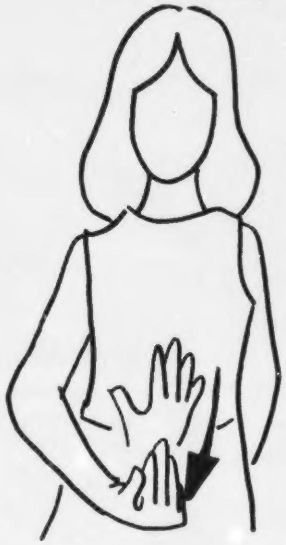
Right open hand brushes across left curved fingers.

WATER



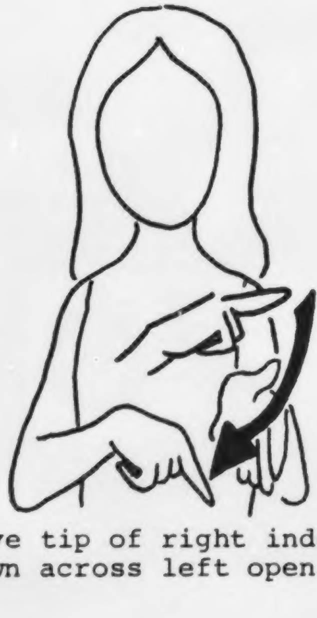
Right hand forms "W." Index finger taps mouth several times.

WET (PANTS)



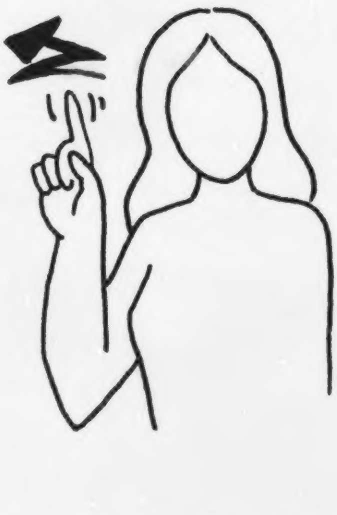
Right open hand, facing self, moves down near crotch as fingers come together.

WHAT



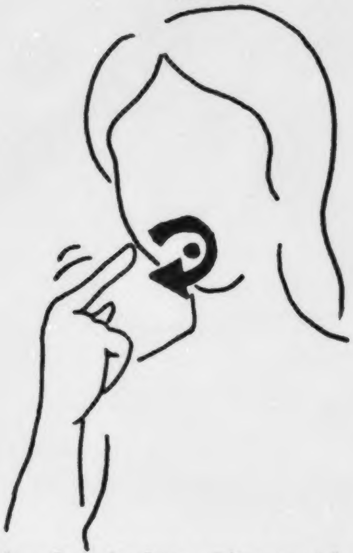
Move tip of right index finger down across left open palm.

WHERE



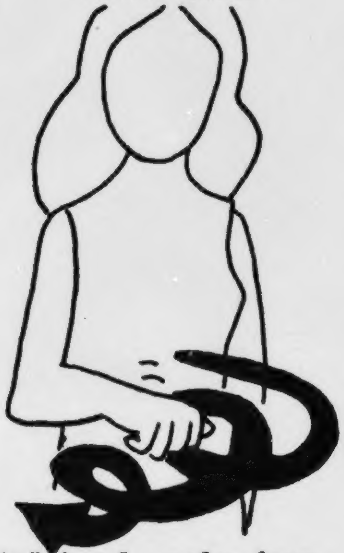
Wave right index finger back and forth, palm forward.

WHO



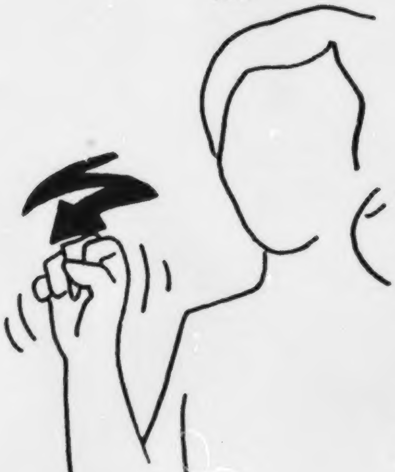
Circle index fingertip to the left around pursed lips.

WIPE TABLE



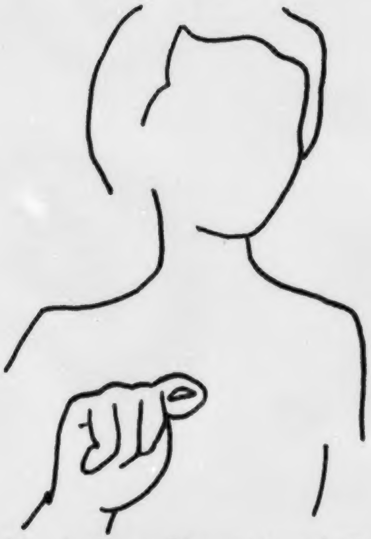
Right "A" hand, palm down, makes circular motions to the right.

YES



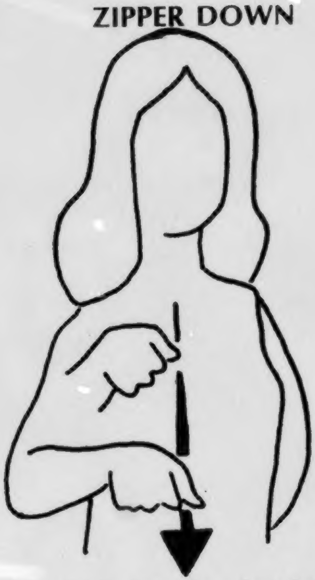
Right "S" hand, palm facing forward, nod up and down several times.

YOU



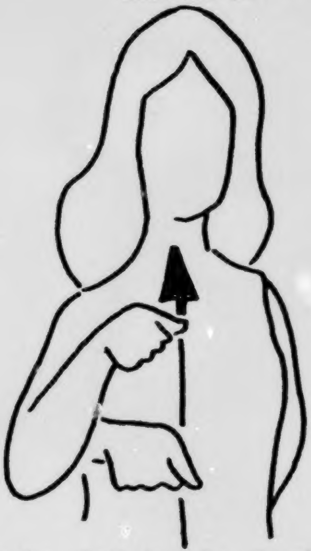
Right index finger points out.

ZIPPER DOWN



Right "A" hand, facing self, moves down center of chest.

ZIPPER UP



Right "A" hand, facing self, moves up center of chest.

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